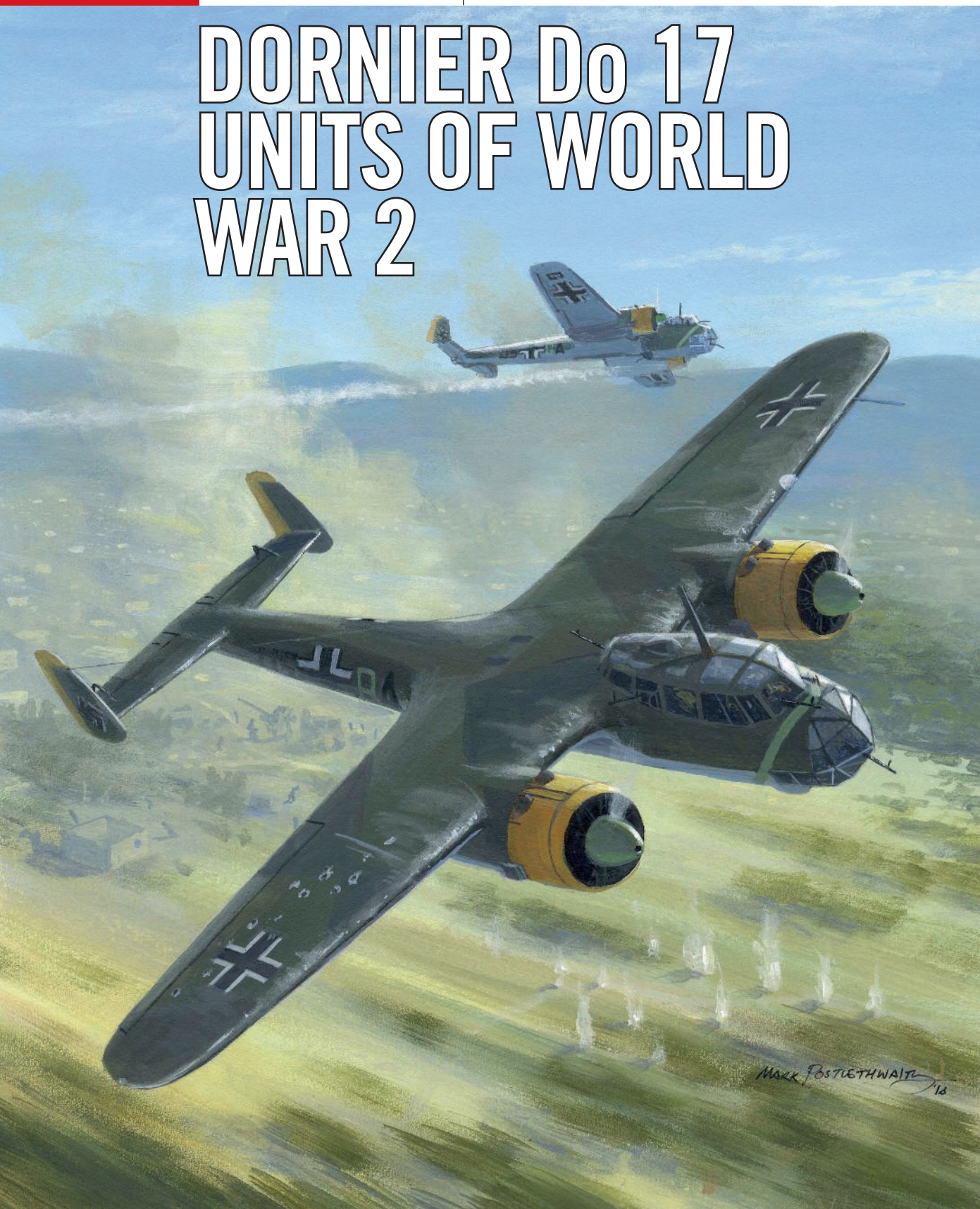
COMBAT AIRCRAFT 129

Chris Goss

DORNIER Do 17 UNITS OF WORLD WAR 2



COMBAT AIRCRAFT

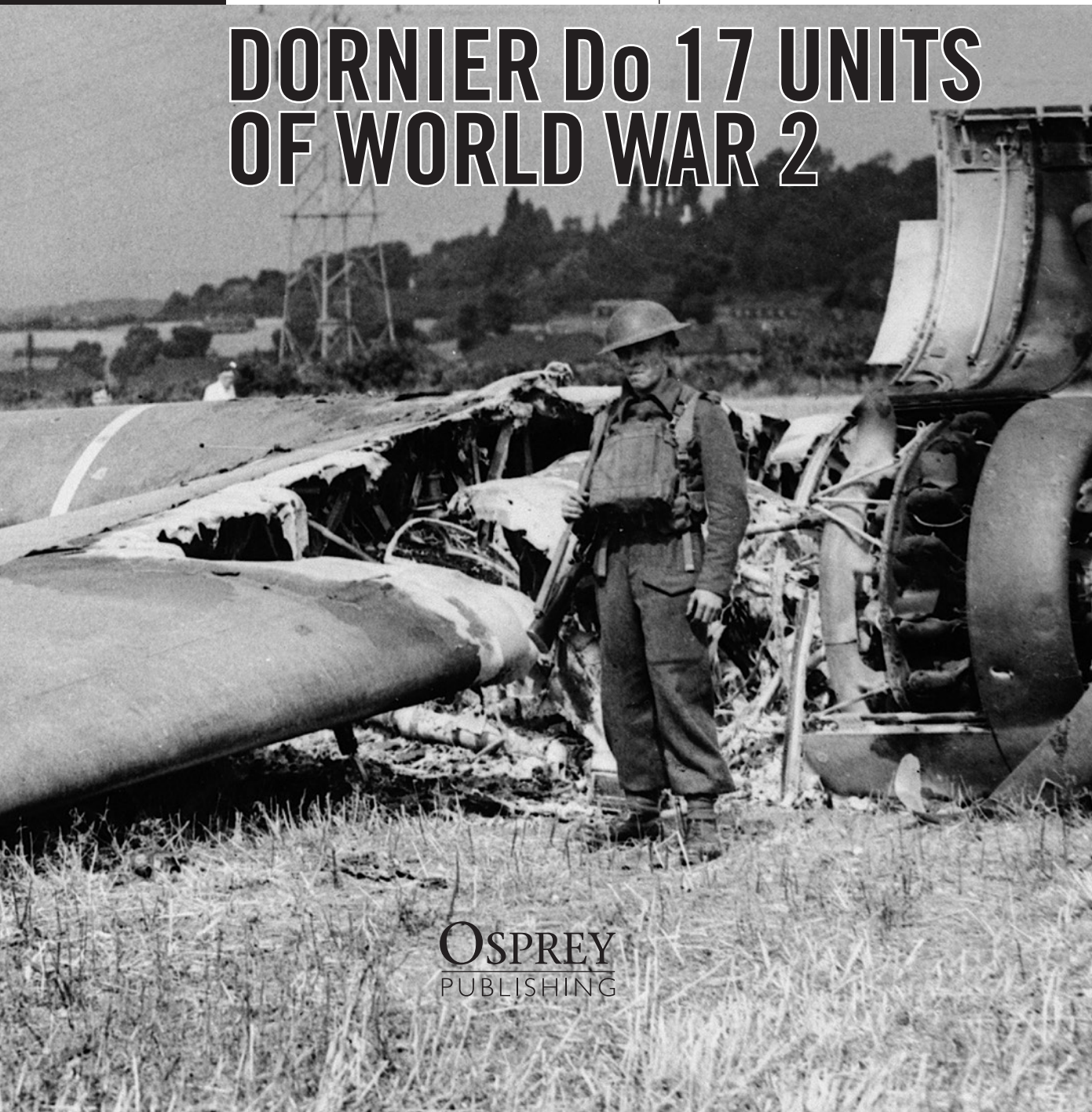
129 DORNIER Do 17 UNITS OF WORLD WAR 2

SERIES EDITOR TONY HOLMES

129 COMBAT AIRCRAFT

Chris Goss

DORNIER Do 17 UNITS OF WORLD WAR 2



OSPREY PUBLISHING

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE
DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT AND INTO ACTION 6

CHAPTER TWO
POLAND AND *'SITZKRIEG'* 13

CHAPTER THREE
BATTLE OF FRANCE 23

CHAPTER FOUR
BATTLE OF BRITAIN 33

CHAPTER FIVE
BLITZ 67

CHAPTER SIX
NEW HORIZONS 78

APPENDICES 89

COLOUR PLATES COMMENTARY 92
INDEX 96

CHAPTER ONE

DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT AND INTO ACTION

In October 1935, Dornier at last publicly revealed its Do 17 V1, a twin-engined commercial transport aircraft that had first flown on 23 November 1934 and was capable of carrying six passengers at relatively high speed. In the years that followed, it continued to be modified to such an extent that in July 1937 the Do 17 V8 participated in the International Military Aircraft Competition in Zürich, Switzerland, where it won the 'Circuit of the Alps'. The turn of speed shown by the aircraft to secure this title clearly proved that contemporary fighters might have difficulty in catching it should the Do 17 ever be developed into a bomber.

By the summer of 1937, *Deutsche Luft Hansa* (DLH) had had a pair of Do 17s in its possession for more than two years. These aircraft had been acquired after the airline issued a requirement for a high-speed mail-carrying aeroplane capable of accommodating six passengers for use on its European express routes. The Do 17's aerodynamic design, combined with its twin liquid-cooled BMW VI V12 engines – the most powerful aero engines then available in Germany – meant that the aircraft actually exceeded DLH's performance requirements. In

The *Legion Condor*'s VB/88 initially operated E-, F- and P-model Do 17s in both the bomber and reconnaissance roles, and then exclusively in the reconnaissance role with A/88. It would appear that Do 17E 27-24 of A/88 has suffered double engine failure and force-landed in a Spanish cornfield. The details pertaining to this incident remain unknown. The aircraft had A/88's devil's head insignia on the outside of both engine nacelles, as well as a large personal emblem below the cockpit – believed to be a small child with a shock of black hair

fact, the Do 17 could attain speeds that were nearly 60 mph faster than other aircraft (including fighters) then entering service with the embryonic Luftwaffe.

Following the first flight of the Do 17 V1, the near-identical V2 and V3 were handed over to DLH in early 1935. Although the airline was pleased with the speed and mail-carrying potential of the aircraft, it quickly concluded that the design was impractical from a passenger viewpoint. The aeroplane boasted just two tiny cabins, one for two passengers behind the flightdeck and another for four behind the wing. DLH had little choice but to reject the Do 17 as an airliner.

The saviour of the Do 17 came in the form of ex-Dornier employee *Flugkapitän* Robert Untucht, who was then working for DLH as its liaison officer with the *Reichsluftfahrtministirium* (RLM). Untucht had the opportunity to fly one of the prototypes, and he was impressed by its handling qualities and performance. He duly suggested that with modifications, the aircraft could become a good bomber. Untucht persuaded Dornier and the RLM that this was possible, and after subsequent flights, the company was instructed to produce Do 17 V4. Unlike the previous prototypes, V4 had the passenger-carrying aspects of its design (principally fuselage windows and seating) removed and the single fin replaced by smaller twin fins mounted either end of a horizontal tailplane. Removal of the forward passenger compartment also allowed an expansion of the flightdeck and the fitting of a bomb-bay.

Two more prototypes were built – V5 was identical to V4, whilst V6 was powered by Hispano-Suiza 12Yrs engines, giving it a maximum speed in excess of 240 mph. This meant that V6 was faster than most fighters being fielded by rival air arms, and Dornier believed that defensive armament was therefore superfluous. Nevertheless, as well as a partly glazed nose, V7 included a fuselage-mounted blister behind the cockpit that housed a single 7.92 mm MG 15 machine gun.

V8, the star of the show at Zürich, was retained by Dornier as a development airframe. V9, which followed, was more representative of things to come, with the aircraft's nose being reduced in length and the glazed area increased in size, the gun blister aft of the cockpit refined and the vertical tail surfaces enlarged. Furthermore, V9 was fitted out as a military aircraft – for all intents and purposes, it was identical to the Do 17E (bomber – 328 built) and F (reconnaissance – 77 built) variants that began to roll off the Dornier production line in early 1936. As the final prototype built, V10 was used in trials fitted with modified BMW VI engines. Following the completion of this airframe, Dornier commenced construction of Do 17s for the Luftwaffe.

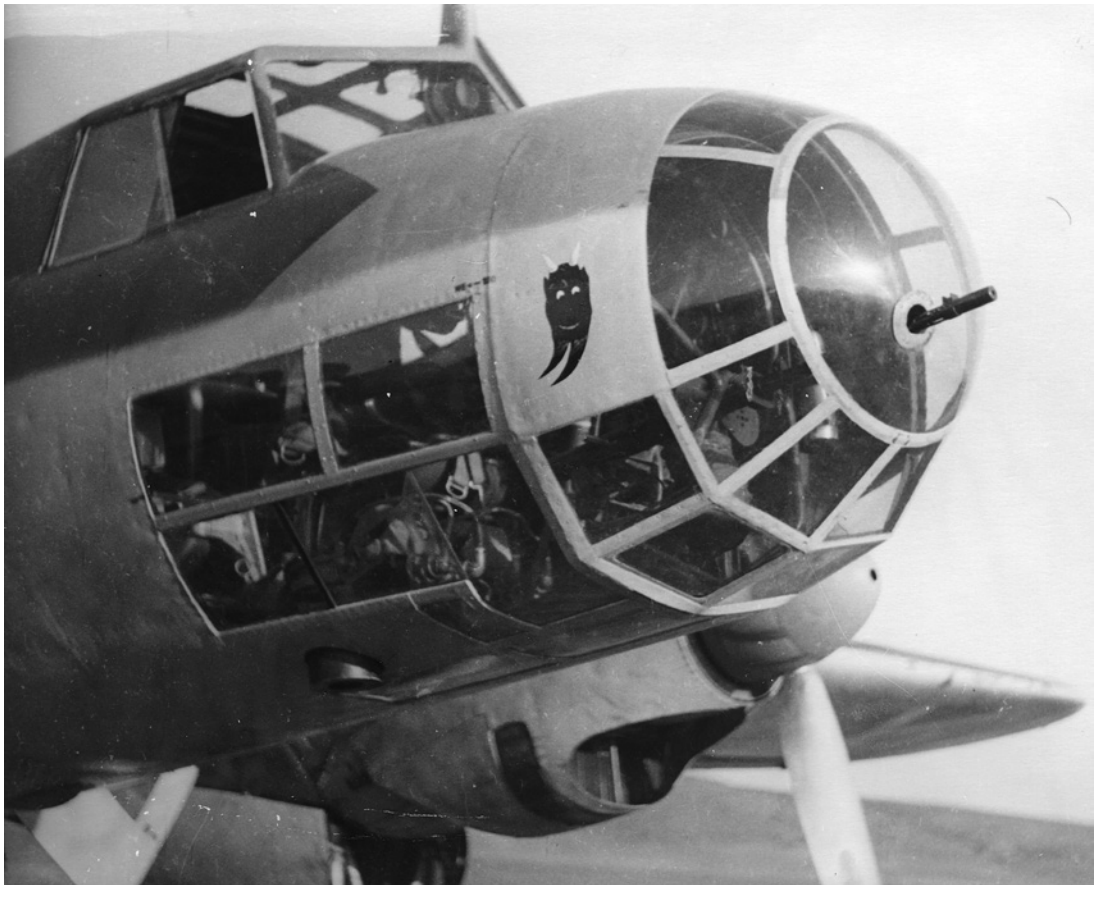
The Do 17E-1 and Do 17F-1 versions were built at Dornier's factories at Allmansweiler, Löwenthal and Manzell. Both variants were essentially the same, the latter having no bombsight (and no noticeable bulge underneath the nose) and no internal bomb racks. Instead, the F-1 had additional fuel tanks and two vertical cameras mounted in the bomb-bay. Armament-wise, both types had the rear-firing MG 15 in the gondola. Later, a second MG 15 was fitted to fire downwards through the bomb-bay. The Do 17E-1 could carry a 1100-lb bomb load, which was capable of being increased to 1650 lbs on shorter range missions.

Dornier's decision to break the Do 17 airframe down into major components, thus allowing sub-contractorisation and ease of component replacement, was also a first for the aviation industry. This model, which was soon adopted by other aircraft manufacturers, allowed Do 17E/Fs to be delivered to the Luftwaffe from early 1937.

INTO SERVICE

The first units to convert to the Do 17E-1 were Oberstleutnant Otto Hoffmann von Waldau's I./*Kampfgeschwader* (KG) 153 at Merseberg and Generalmajor Joachim Kortüm's I./KG 155 at Giebelstadt, the new aircraft replacing a previous Dornier bomber in the form of the Do 23. Oberstleutnant Hermann Fricke's *Aufklärungsgruppe (Fern)* 122 (previously known as (F)/27)) commenced its conversion to the Do 17F-1 shortly thereafter. The remaining *Gruppen* of KG 153 and KG 155 converted throughout 1937, with KG 255, commanded by Oberst Willibald Spang, forming at Landsberg in the spring of 1937.

With this rapid expansion of Do 17-equipped units came the opportunity to test the aircraft in combat. In March 1937, the first of three Do 17Es arrived in Seville, Spain, where it became part of *Versuchsbombergruppe* (VB) 88 commanded by Oberleutnant Rudolf Moreau. The unit, flying



A/88's distinctive devil's head marking also adorned the noses of some Do 17Fs. The heavily glazed forward fuselage is seen to good advantage in this close-up view, as is the muzzle of the nose-mounted 7.92 mm MG 15 machine gun

This newly delivered Do 17P of A/88 was almost certainly photographed at Buñuel, in northern Spain. The unit received five P-models in December 1938, the aircraft being coded 27-28 to 27-32

a mix of types, had been specifically formed to operationally test new aircraft as part of the *Legion Condor*. It is thought that the Do 17 flew its first mission on 12 March 1937, operating from Matacán-Salamanca in support of General Francisco Franco's Nationalist forces.

VB/88 would suffer its first combat loss on 18 April 1937 when Do 17E-2 27-2 was shot down by an I-15 fighter flown by either Felipe del Rio Crespo or Andrés Rodriguez Panadero, the bomber crashing near Zaratamo, two miles from Gualdacano. Although Leutnant Hans Sobotka was killed, Unteroffiziere Otto Hofmeister and Friedrich Müller successfully bailed out.

It soon became obvious that other aircraft, in particular the Heinkel He 111, could carry a bigger bomb load, thus leaving the Do 17 to perform tasks such as reconnaissance. In August 1937, elements of (F)/122 (which would be re-designated (F)/22 two months later) were sent to Spain to undertake this role as part of *Aufklärungsgruppe* (A)/88. Commanded by Oberleutnant Hans-Detleff von Kessel (who would be killed in action on 4 September 1937 – he was replaced by Hauptmann Joachim Gerndt), the unit was based at Villarcayo. The Do 17F-1's impressive top speed made it virtually untouchable by Spanish Republican fighters, and it quickly replaced the appreciably slower Heinkel He 70 in the photo-reconnaissance role in-theatre. Examples also began to reach all long-range and some short-range reconnaissance units in Germany at this time too.

In August 1938 the *Legion Condor* Do 17E/Fs, known affectionately as *'Bacalao'* (Spanish for Cod), were transferred to the Spanish Nationalist

Grupo 8-G-27 at La Cenia. They continued to serve with this unit for a number of years, although as the fighting in the Spanish Civil War escalated in its ferocity, more modern fighter aircraft such as the Polikarpov I-15 and I-16 proved capable of intercepting the Do 17E-1 and F-1. This in turn gave Dornier the impetus to improve the aircraft.

With the E- and F-models in full production, the company began looking at ways of improving its basic design. The Do 17 V8 was duly re-engined with Daimler-Benz DB 600A liquid-cooled engines driving improved propellers. Re-designated the Do 17M V1, the aircraft boasted a top speed of 264 mph. Impressive as this performance was, the decision was made that the DB 600 would be for fighter aircraft use only, forcing Dornier to consider the air-cooled radial Bramo Fafnir 323A-1 engine instead. The conversion from liquid-cooled to air-cooled engines was relatively straightforward, and in 1938 the Do 17E/F started to be replaced on the production lines by the Do 17M (bomber, of which about 200 were built) and P (reconnaissance, of which about 230 were built) variants. In the search for increased range for the reconnaissance variant, the Do 17P was later powered by the BMW 132N radial engine.

As a result of the aircraft's service with the *Legion Condor* in the Spanish 'proving ground', the Luftwaffe instructed Dornier to increase the defensive armament fitted in the Do 17M through the installation of a forward-mounted MG 15 whose barrel protruded through the windscreen. The weapon could be fired by either the pilot or observer. The M-model's bomb-bay was also stretched, increasing the payload to 2205 lbs.

Two aircrew run the BMW 132N radial engines up on a brand new Do 17P from 3(F)./123. This unit was formed 1 November 1938 at Würzburg, where this photograph was taken

From 1938, the two new variants began to replace Do 17E/Fs in Luftwaffe units. By the late summer of that year, some 480 Do 17s of all variants were now in service with the Luftwaffe. In Spain, A/88, commanded by Major Paul Matussek (who had taken over from Hauptmann Karl Hentschel, who had in turn replaced Hauptmann Gerndt after the latter was wounded on 5 February 1938) had received five Do 17Ps in December 1938. The unit completed its last reconnaissance missions from Barciencia on or around 19 March 1939, and when the war ended less than a fortnight later, its four airworthy Do 17Ps took part in the victory flypast.

The Do 17 had acquitted itself well in the reconnaissance role with the *Legion Condor*. Indeed, the crew of Oberfeldwebel Ernst Sorge, Leutnant Wolfram Philipps and Unteroffizier Alfons Wawrok had flown 57 missions. Returning to 1.(F)/22 after Spain, Sorge and Philipps survived the war (the former being awarded the *Ritterkreuz, Ehrenpokal* and *Deutsches Kreuz in Gold* and the latter becoming a fighter pilot). Feldwebel Alfons Wawrok was killed in action on 8 November 1939, however. A total of 32 Do 17s (all but five of which were E- and F-models) served in Spain, with six being lost on operations and seven written off in accidents.

By the spring of 1939 it was clear that, as a pure bomber, the Do 17 was inferior to other German types (specifically the He 111 and the soon to be introduced Junkers Ju 88) that could carry more ordnance over greater distances. Dornier was perfectly aware of this fact, and had already begun development of the next generation of Do 17. Nevertheless, the Do 17M/P continued to be operated by reconnaissance units for at least another three years.

As a direct result of the *Legion Condor*'s experiences in Spain, Dornier now completely redesigned the aircraft's forward fuselage and cockpit. The latter was more pod-like in an attempt to give the crew increased room and improved visibility. The cockpit roof was raised over the line of the fuselage and completely glazed, whilst the nose was also similarly glazed. The dorsal gun was moved aft to the rear of the cockpit, giving its operator a considerably wider field of fire. The cockpit floor was dropped under the fuselage and extended back in the direction of the leading edge of the wing, allowing the installation of a third MG 15 firing aft through yet more glazing. Nicknamed *Kampfkopf* ('Battlehead'), the new cockpit made the front of the Do 17 considerably larger and less aerodynamic than had previously been the case. The rest of the airframe was not changed.

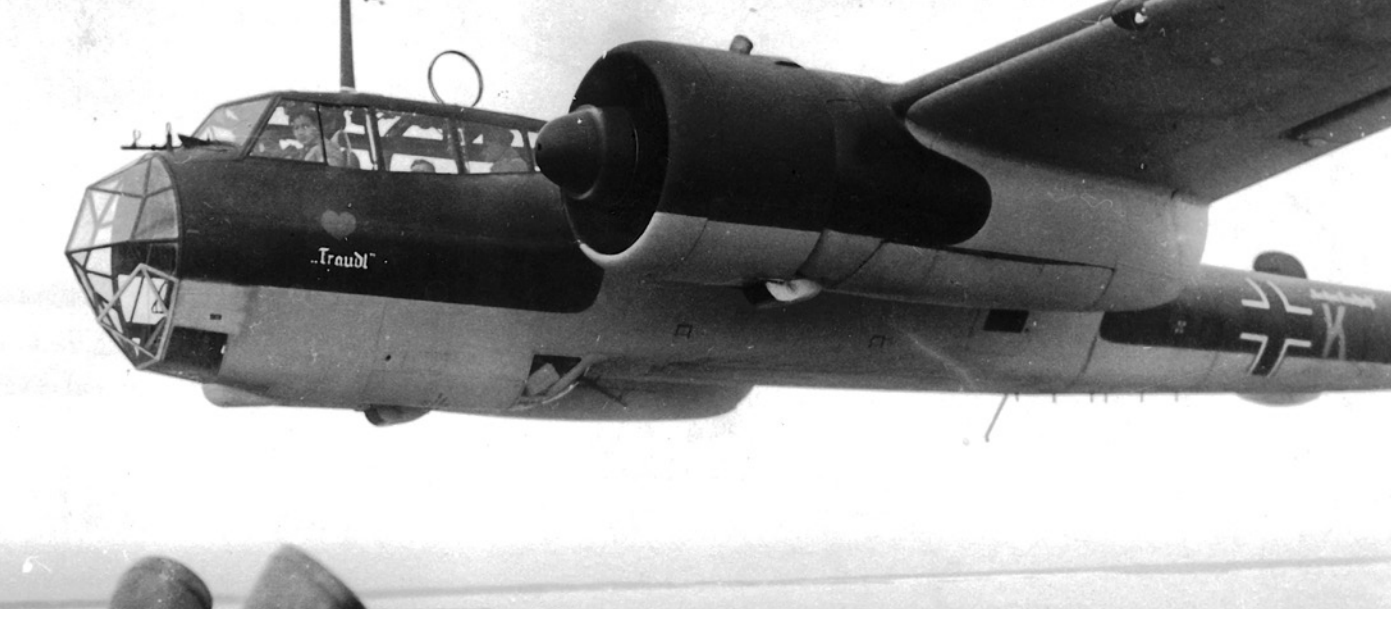
This layout was first seen on the Do 17S, which had liquid-cooled DB 600G engines. Only three examples of this aircraft were produced, however, as the Luftwaffe preferred subsequent models. Next came the DB 600A-powered Do 17U, a five-seat pathfinder version of which 15 were produced. Shortly thereafter, the decree by the RLM that DB 600 engines would be reserved for fighters only resulted in the modified airframe being powered by Bramo Fafnir 323A-1 radial engines. Thus, the Do 17Z was born.

The Z-1 was essentially the same as the M-1, apart from the forward fuselage, and despite the relatively un-aerodynamic *Kampfkopf*, the aircraft's performance generally remained unchanged. However, when a fourth crewman, increased defensive armament and a 2200-lb bomb load were added, the Z-1 quickly became underpowered. The answer

Thanks to the distinctive glazing of the Do 17Z's *Kampfkopf* ('Battlehead'), the pilot of this aircraft from 7./KG 3 can be seen sitting in the cockpit behind the control yoke, with his feet resting on the rudder pedals, while the bomber is refuelled at Heiligenbeil in the late summer of 1939

was to either halve the bomb load or re-engine the airframe. With the former not being a palatable option for the Luftwaffe, Dornier fitted the Do 17Z-2 with more powerful 1000-hp Bramo Fafnir 323P engines, each of which had a two-speed supercharger for better all-round performance. Nevertheless, when the Z-2 was carrying a full bomb load, its operational radius was just 210 miles.

The remaining three Do 17Z variants to attain series production were the Z-3, which had a reduced bomb load and Rb 50/30 and Rb 20/30 automatic cameras incorporated into the crew entry hatch, the Z-4 dual control trainer and the Z-5, fitted with additional flotation aids and life-saving equipment for maritime operations – Z-5s would be predominantly used by Oberst Hermann Edert's *Küstenfliegergruppe* (KüFlGr) 606. All three variants were powered by improved Bramo Fafnir 323P-2 engines. The Z-model proved to be the most-produced version of the Do 17, with Dornier completing 420 at its Oberpfaffenhofen plant, Henschel building 320 in Berlin-Schönefeld, HFB contributing 74 from its Hamburg plant and Siebel constructing 73 in its Halle an der Saale factory.



CHAPTER TWO

POLAND AND *'SITZKRIEG'*

5K+KT of 9./KG 3 was marked with the ace of hearts and the name "*Traudl*" on its nose, as well as something not quite readable in this photograph above the letters KT in its fuselage code. Most III. *Gruppe* aircraft had their *Staffel* badges applied to either the port or starboard sides of the nose beneath the cockpit, this insignia consisting of a hand of four aces for the *Stab*, the ace of clubs for 7. *Staffel*, ace of spades for 8. *Staffel* and ace of hearts for 9. *Staffel*, as seen here. This near-pristine Do 17Z was photographed during a training mission from Heiligenbeil shortly before the invasion of Poland. KG 3 was the first Do 17-equipped unit to go into action on 1 September 1939

The invasion of Poland by German forces on 1 September 1939 was supported by the largest concentration of Do 17s available to date, with around 20 *Staffeln* of Do 17Ps being used for reconnaissance and various *Gruppen* from KG 2, KG 3, KG 76 and KG 77 undertaking bomber operations. A small number of Do 17M/Zs also saw combat in direct support of Wehrmacht troops as they advanced into Poland, while nine *Stukagruppen* used Do 17M/Ps for reconnaissance missions. In total, in the region of 370 Do 17 bombers and 262 Do 17 reconnaissance aircraft were available for the start of the campaign.

The first operational mission flown by a Do 17 *Staffel* over Poland was undertaken by aircraft from Oberstleutnant Karl Neuhüttler's III./ KG 3. Taking off from Heiligenbeil at 0530 hrs, a full 45 minutes before the official outbreak of hostilities, crews attacked approaches to the railway bridge at Dirschau. At least four reconnaissance Do 17Ps were subsequently lost on 1 September, with a similar number being damaged to varying degrees.

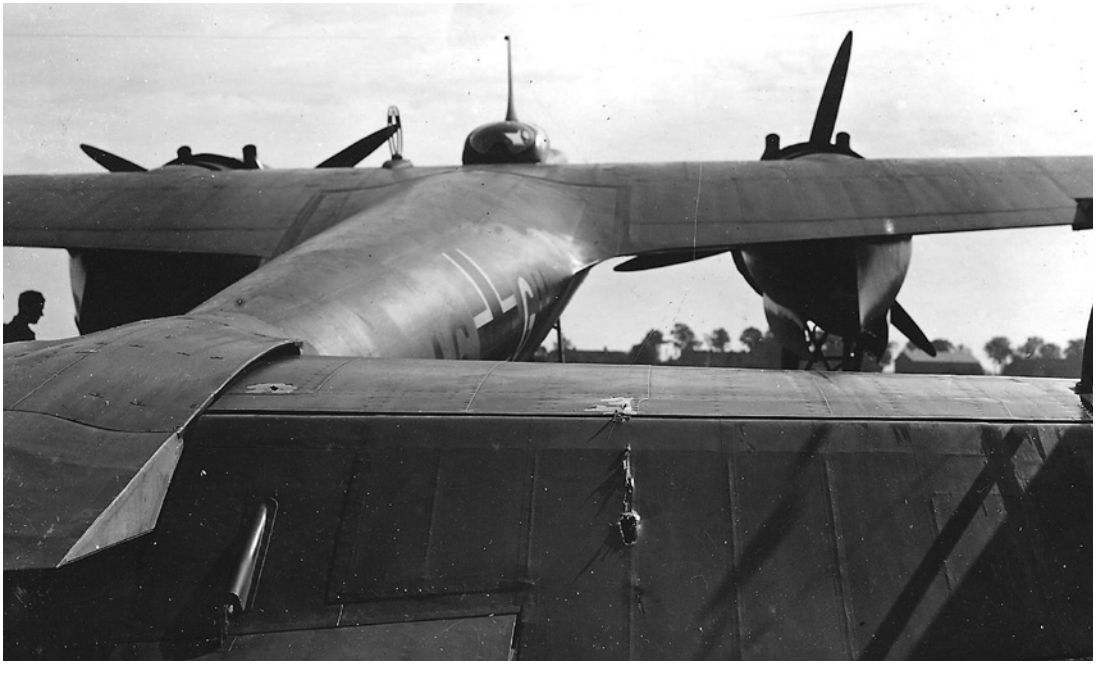
The bomber units also sustained losses, with all bar KG 76 having Do 17s shot down. KG 2 had two aircraft damaged, with the Do 17 flown by Leutnant Hans-Wilhelm Tamm being holed in a fuel tank by flak and forced to crash-land. Its crew was captured, and then released 48 hours later. KG 3 suffered two destroyed and three damaged, while KG 77 had no fewer than six aircraft lost and 15 damaged – all of the bombers lost

by the *Kampfgeschwader* were listed as E-1s, KG 77 commencing its conversion to the Do 17Z in the middle of September 1939. Overall, the Do 17 force had 12 aircrew killed, three captured and ten wounded or injured.

Despite the early attrition, Do 17 losses overall throughout the 36-day campaign were light due to the air superiority enjoyed by the Luftwaffe. For example, KG 2, which supplied just I. and II. *Gruppe* flying a mixture of Do 17M/Zs (III./KG 2 was not formed until March 1940), reported the total loss of single Do 17Zs on 1, 3 and 15 September, a solitary Do 17M on 10 September and, unusually, a Do 17U-1 nocturnal pathfinder on 12 September. The latter aircraft was similar to the S-model, but with an extra crewman to operate additional radio equipment installed in the bomber – just 15 were built. In terms of the human cost, KG 2 had had nine aircrew killed, four captured and 12 wounded.

KG 77 was still operating aged Do 17E-1 when Germany invaded Poland, and on the first day of the campaign it suffered the heaviest casualties of any of the Dornier-equipped units. Six aircraft were lost and 15, including this machine, damaged. The *Kampfgeschwader* would start converting to the Do 17Z a few weeks after the campaign had ended

Most of the aircraft lost or damaged between 1 and 27 September 1939 were hit by flak or ground fire, as the Do 17s were exclusively used in low-level attacks. Such high-risk tactics continued to be employed by



Do 17P A6+GH of 1.(F)/120 was photographed upon its return to Heiligenbeil in September 1939 after a brief encounter with Polish fighter. The damage inflicted by the latter was so slight (only two bullet holes can be seen here) it is unlikely that this would have been recorded by the unit

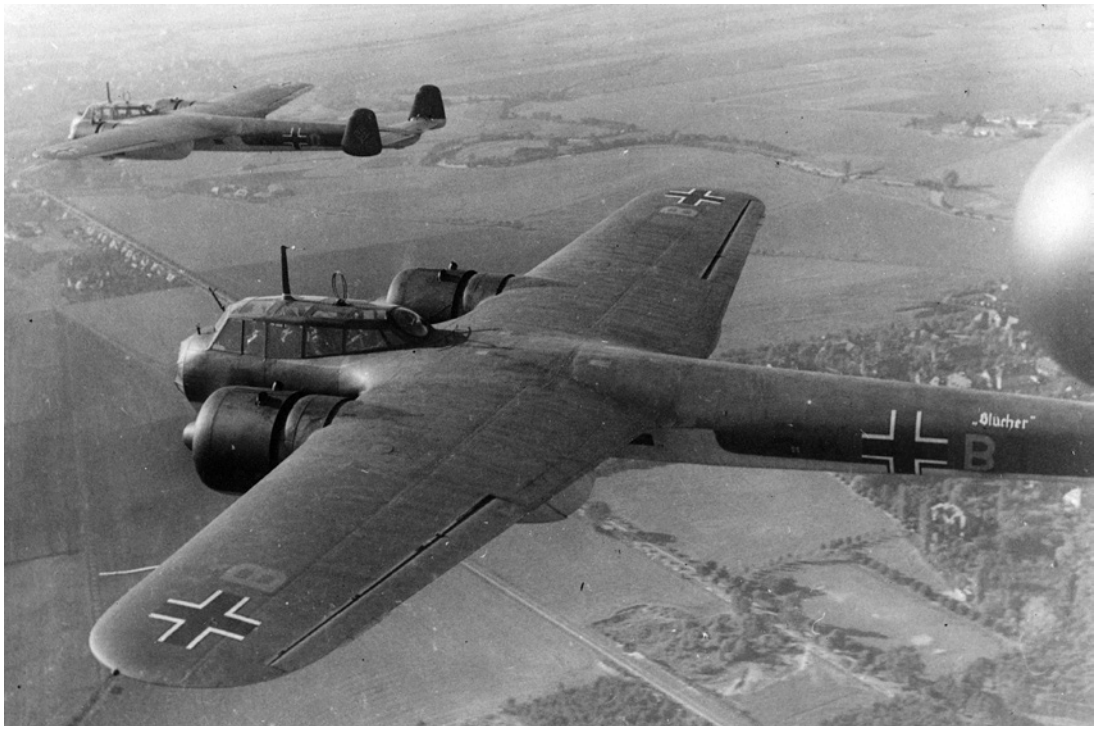
OPPOSITE
Aircrew of 7./KG 3 photographed on, or about, 10 September 1939 at Heiligenbeil with bombs that have been clearly marked with the name of their target – Warsaw. These *Kampfflieger* are, from left to right, Unteroffizier Hans Fedder, Feldwebeln Markau and Hoffmann, Oberleutnant Dietrich Marwitz and Hauptmann Ernst *Freiherr* von Bibra (probably *Staffelkapitän* of 7/KG 3). Von Bibra would be awarded the *Ritterkreuz*, *Ehrenpokal* and *Deutsches Kreuz in Gold* prior to his death on 15 February 1943 while commanding III./KG 51 in the East. Marwitz would be killed in action over the North Sea on 27 October 1940, by which time he was *Staffelkapitän* of 8./KG 30. The Do 17 in the background is 5K+AR, which was presumably the *Staffelkapitän*'s aircraft – the Do 17Z recovered by the RAF Museum in 2013 is thought to have been coded 5K+AR

units equipped with the aircraft throughout the Battle of Britain and during the night *Blitz*.

A good example of how quickly the Polish campaign was over comes from the logbook of Unteroffizier Willi Lüder, a Bordfunker with 7./KG 3. Based at Heiligenbeil, he flew 32 training flights in August 1939 with a number of different pilots but did not undertake a single operational flight over Poland, even though some from his *Gruppe* did (only II. and III./KG 3 participated in the campaign). In December 1939, Lüder and his regular pilot Oberleutnant Stephan Suin de Boutemard converted to the He 111 at Marienburg with II./KG 28. When this unit disbanded in the spring of 1940 they both joined 4./LG 1 at Langenhagen in mid-May, converting to the Ju 88 shortly thereafter. Lüder did not fly in a Do 17 after 7 December 1939, a sign that its days were already numbered in the frontline bomber force.

The Dornier's Achilles' Heel remained its small bomb load and limited range, and neither issue could be resolved without a significant redesign of the aircraft. The Do 17 was thus increasingly side-lined by the He 111, which had an appreciably bigger bomb load (4400 lbs of ordnance could be carried internally or 7900 lbs externally), and the Ju 88, which had an impressive top speed of 317 mph and a range of 1430 miles. The first Ju 88A-1s had made the aircraft's combat debut over the North Sea in late September 1939. As a result, by the end of 1939 Do 17 production was already slowing down, with the final examples being completed in the summer of 1940. In total, it believed that 2139 Do 17s of all types were built.

The last reported combat loss of the Poland campaign was a Do 17P of 1.(F)/120, possibly commanded by Leutnant Kurt Ellermann, which was lost over Modlin on 27 September 1939.



A formation of three Do 17Zs of 9./KG 3 head home to Heiligenbeil. 5K+BT has had the word "*Blücher*" applied in a suitably gothic typeface above the yellow B in the fuselage code. The aircraft leading the formation appears to be 5K+DT. Neither of the Do 17s are marked with 9. *Staffel*'s ace of hearts insignia

'SITZKRIEG'

From the very start of World War 2, Do 17s were quite active carrying out reconnaissance missions over France, Belgium and Holland during what was dubbed the *'Sitzkrieg'* or Phoney War on the Western Front. However, for crews involved in these often harrowing missions, the conflict could feel very real indeed. 3.(F)/22 suffered an unfortunate loss on 24 September 1939 when a Do 17P fell victim to friendly fire (flak), resulting in the deaths of two of its three crew. The first operational loss inflicted on the Dornier force came on 26 October when Do 17P Wk-Nr. 4052 F6+HM of 4.(F)/122 experienced engine failure during a reconnaissance mission along the east coast of England. The aircraft crash-landed at Uithuizen, in neutral Holland, where all three crewmen were interned.

The first Do 17P to be shot down by the enemy fell on 30 October 1939 when future ace Plt Off Peter 'Boy' Mould of Hurricane-equipped No 1 Sqn intercepted aircraft Wk-Nr. 4414 from 2.(F)/123 that was undertaking a photo-reconnaissance mission in the Toul area at an altitude of 18,000 ft. The aircraft exploded upon hitting the ground at Traveron, resulting in the deaths of *Staffelkapitän* and Austrian count Hauptmann Balduin von Normann und Audenhove, Oberleutnant Hermann Heistenbergk and Feldwebel Friedrich Pfeuffer. Mould's kill was the first enemy aircraft to be shot down over France by the RAF since November 1918. Squadronmate, and fellow future ace, Flg Off Paul Richey describes Mould's notable victory in the following extract from his autobiography *Fighter Pilot*;

'He did an ordinary straight astern attack and fired one longish burst, with his sights starting above the Dornier and moving slowly round the

An unidentified crew from 7./KG 3 pose with an SC 250 550-lb bomb at Heilingenbeil on 15 September 1939. Their aircraft is marked with 7. *Staffel*'s ace of clubs insignia and the name "*Ly*" beneath the cockpit. Such personalisation of German bombers was relatively commonplace during the early campaigns of World War 2

fuselage. The Hun caught fire immediately, went into a vertical spiral and eventually made a large hole in the French countryside. It exploded on striking the ground, and there were no survivors. The remains of a gun from the machine, together with a bullet-holed oxygen bottle, now adorned our Mess.'

November 1939 would see the first Dornier lost to a French fighter when, on the 7th, future ace Sgt Edouard Salès of Curtiss Hawk 75A-equipped *Groupe de Chasse* (GC) II/5 shot down a Do 17P of 3.(F)/22 at Hahlenberg. Its crew, Oberleutnant Hans Wagener and Oberfeldwebeln Herbert Thor and Alfred Gerbig, were killed. The following day, Hawk 75A pilot (and another future ace) 2Lt Camille Plubeau of GC II/4 downed a Do 17P of 1.(F)/22 engaged on a reconnaissance mission south of Zweibrücken. The aircraft exploded northeast of Bitsch, killing Oberleutnant Hans Blankemeier, Unteroffizier Clemens Sieger and Feldwebel Alfons Wawrok – the latter had been a member of the *Legion Condor*'s most successful Do 17 crew.

That same day, Flg Off Edgar 'Cobber' Kain (who would subsequently achieve fame as the RAF's first ace of World War 2) of Hurricane-equipped No 73 Sqn shot down Do 17P Wk-Nr. 4062 of 1.(F)/123, the aircraft crashing in the centre of Lubey. Its crew, Oberleutnant Hans Kutterer, Oberfeldwebel Georg Stühler and Obergefreiter Heinrich Schneidmüller, were killed. On 10 November Plt Off Horatio Dunn of Hurricane-equipped No 87 Sqn badly damaged a Do 17P of 4.(F)/121, which crashed in Germany near Echterdingen, killing Oberleutnant Horst Martinköwitz,

Three *Kampfflieger* from 7./KG 3 pose at Heiligenbeil with a brand new Do 17Z (yet to have unit markings applied) in the late summer 1939. At far left is Bordfunker Unteroffizier Willi Lüder, who was shot down and taken prisoner on 15 August 1940 whilst flying with Ju 88A-equipped *Stab* II./LG 1

Leutnant Franz Langert and Feldwebel Erwin Frehse. Dunn's Hurricane ran out of fuel whilst engaging the Dornier and he force-landed in neutral Belgium, where he was briefly interned.

Only 11 days would pass before yet another Do 17P was lost, the aircraft falling to Sgt Edouard Salès (his second victory) and Sgt René Trémolet of GC II/5. Oberleutnant Werner Thiel and Feldwebel Ludwig Schneider of 3.(F)/22 were captured when they force-landed Do 17P 4N+EL at Eincheville during a reconnaissance mission to Pont-a-Mousson. The remaining crew member, Gefreiter Alfred Gerner, was killed. On 22 November four pilots from Morane-Saulnier MS.406-equipped GC II/7 chased a Do 17P of 4.(F)/121 all the way back to the border, where it crash-landed at Seefeld, three miles west of Sulzberg. Leutnant Helmut Böttcher and Gefreiter Heinz Gründling were badly wounded and Leutnant Rolf Habermann killed.

The final Do 17s to be lost in combat in 1939 were all downed on 23 November in a large-scale engagement with both British and French fighters. In addition to a He 111 of 2.(F)/122 that was shared between No 1 Sqn and GC II/5, four Do 17Ps and a lone Do 17Z of *Stab.*/KG 2 were lost. The latter aircraft, flown by Oberleutnant Alfred Winter, was

A Do 17P from 1.(F)/120 has its port main landing gear tyre changed after suffering a blow-out while taxiing on the grass at Neuhausen or Heiligenbeil in September 1939. The unit's distinctive reindeer head insignia has been applied beneath the cockpit

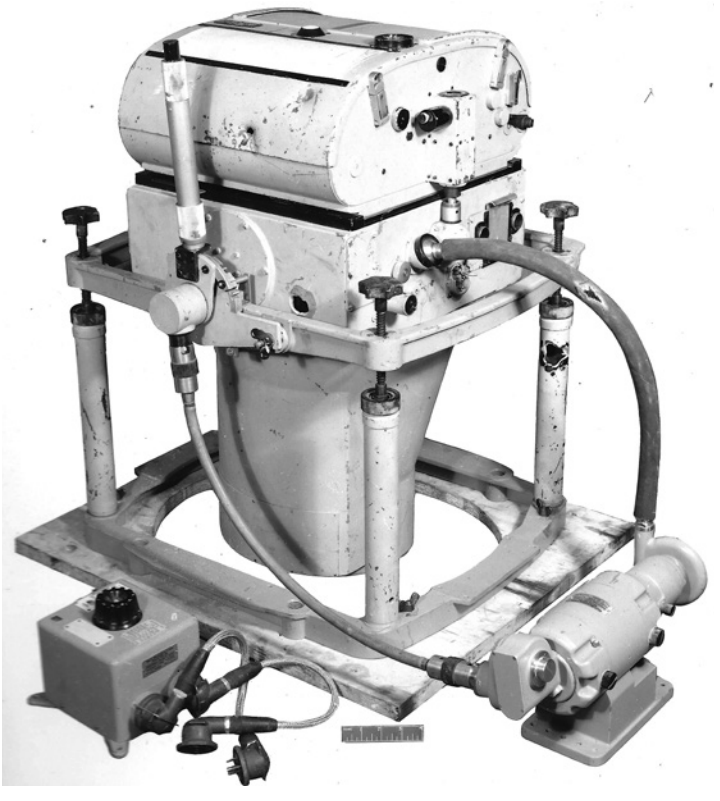
undertaking a reconnaissance mission in the Paris area when it was initially attacked over Fléville by future ace Capt Jean Accart in a Hawk 75A of GC I/5 and then finished off by Flt Lt John Scoular (also a future ace) and Sgt John Winn of No 73 Sqn over Jarney. The bomber, which crashed at Sancy-le-Haut at 1310 hrs killing all of the crew, was KG 2's first combat loss since Poland and would be its last until 10 May 1940.

The four Do 17Ps destroyed on the 23rd had all been downed earlier in the day. The first to fall was an aircraft of 1.(F)/123 that was shot down by MS.406 pilots Lt Maurice Bissoudre and Sgt Robert Tourné of GC II/3 east of Besançon. It crash-landed at Côtebrune at 0945 hrs, after which Feldwebel Leo Knoch and his two crew successfully crossed the Swiss border and were interned. Thirty minutes later, Flg Off 'Cobber' Kain of No 73 Sqn shot down a Do 17P of 3.(F)/122 engaged on a reconnaissance mission in the Reims area. It crash-landed near Raucourt-et-Flaba, where Oberfeldwebel Baptist Schlapp and his two crew were captured in a wounded state.

At 1045 hrs at least four Hurricanes from No 1 Sqn intercepted a Do 17P of 4.(F)/122 that was photographing the Cambrai area. Unteroffizier Klaus Ehlers bailed out and was killed prior to the Do 17 crash-landing at Moirement, after which the remaining two crewmen were captured. The pilot, Unteroffizier Arno Frankenberger, had managed to damage the Hurricane flown by American pilot Flg Off 'Pussy' Palmer, who force-landed not far from the Do 17. The final loss of the day was a Do 17P of 5.(F)/122 flown by Unteroffizier Hans Schrutek, which was shot down by Sous-Lt Robert Martin and Adjt Pierre Le Gloan (a future ace) of MS.406-equipped GC III/6. It crashed at Bras-sur-Meuse, north of Verdun, and all three crewmen were captured wounded.

The severe weather experienced in the winter of 1939-40 curtailed air operations, and it was not until 11 January 1940 that the first Do 17P was lost when future aces Lt Edmond Marin La Meslée and Sous-Lt Jean Rey of GC I/5 shot down an aircraft of 3.(F)/11 near Haucourt-la-Rigole, with all three crew being captured. Two days later saw a rare loss when Do 17S-0 Wk-Nr. 2502 (one of just three examples to be built) assigned to 1.(F)/*Aufklärungsgruppe Oberbefehlshaber der Luftwaffe* was intercepted by Capt Bernard Barbier of GC II/4 during a high-altitude reconnaissance mission over the English Channel. The aircraft was crash-landed by Leutnant Theodor Rosarius near Calais, the pilot later reporting;

'During one of my first missions I was photographing shipping in the English Channel at an altitude of 30,500 ft when five Spitfires attacked me. To make matters worse, a flight of French Moranes then attacked me at 16,000 ft. I crash-landed on the Channel coast near Saint-Omer with 312 hits in my aircraft and I was taken prisoner.'



At 1045 hrs on 23 November 1939, Flg Offs Cyril Palmer and John Kilmartin and Sgt Frank Soper of No 1 Sqn intercepted and shot up Do 17P Wk-Nr. 3595 F6+FM of 4.(F)/122. The aircraft duly crash-landed almost intact at Moirement, thus giving the RAF the chance to inspect the Luftwaffe's then principal reconnaissance aircraft and its RC 50/30 camera, which is seen here following its removal from Wk-Nr. 3595. The camera had been hit by a single 0.303-in bullet, which had passed centrally through its body without damaging the internal mechanism

Just one more Do 17 was lost in January in the form of an M-model assigned to short-range reconnaissance unit 2.(H)/13 and flown by Feldwebel Paul Auer. It was shot down near Wiernsheim on the 19th by GC II/5 with the deaths of all three crew. With no Do 17 combat losses in February, it was not until 2 March that the photo-reconnaissance units again fell victim to Allied fighters. In addition to single Do 17Ps being shot down from 1.(F)/22 and 4.(F)/121, resulting in two crewmen being killed and four captured, a second aircraft from 1.(F)/22 returned to base with damage inflicted by French and Belgian fighters.

RAF Hurricanes also enjoyed success on the 2nd, with Plt Off John Mitchell and future ace Sgt Francis Soper of No 1 Sqn shooting down a Do 17P of 4.(F)/11 commanded by Oberleutnant Adolf Leupelt. The aircraft came down at La Petite Pierre, although not before its crew had damaged the Hurricane flown by Mitchell. The British fighter subsequently crashed, killing the New Zealand-born pilot.

Just one more Do 17P would be lost on operations in March 1940 when the aircraft commanded by Leutnant Felix Böcher of 4.(F)/121 crashed for unknown reasons at Mancourt on 28 March. However, three days later, *Wettererkundungsstaffel* (*Wekusta*) 26 lost its first Do 17Z-2 in combat when Flg Off Max Pearson of Spitfire-equipped No 54 Sqn damaged the aircraft's starboard engine off Orfordness, Suffolk, whilst on a weather

Do 17Ps were kept very active flying reconnaissance missions over the French border area throughout the 'Phoney War', with the operational tempo increasing in the lead up to the launching of *Fall Gelb* on 10 May 1940. This P-1, coded 7A+KM, of 4.(F)/121 was intercepted by Sgts Jean Doudiès and Sonntag of GC II/7 over Luxeuil-les-Bains while its crew were attempting to photograph airfields between Remiremont and Montbeliard. It duly crashed near the railway station at Harol, west of Epinal, at 0834 hrs on 2 March 1940. Unteroffiziere Karl-Heinz Jagielki and Alfred Matheus were both killed, but Gefreiter Karl Reschke bailed out wounded and was captured

reconnaissance sortie. Unteroffizier Gerhard Hertel tried to get back to base but the aircraft crashed in the sea of Ameland, killing all four crewmen.

By 1 April 1940, the German invasion of France and the Low Countries was now just 40 days away, and with an improvement in the weather air operations began to increase. With a pressing need for up-to-date photographic imagery of Allied defensive positions and airfields in the West, the Do 17-equipped reconnaissance units were kept busy flying hazardous high-altitude missions over Belgium, Holland and France throughout the month. This in turn brought crews directly into contact with defending Allied fighters, resulting in four Do 17Ps being shot down and four more damaged during April.

Despite the high mission tempo flown by photo-reconnaissance crews this month, and the losses they suffered as a result, their venerable mount's days in the frontline were by now numbered, as both 1.(F)/123 and 3. and 4.(F)/121 had already commenced their conversion to the Ju 88A.

Further north, on 8 April, German forces invaded Norway. However, the part played by the Do 17 in this theatre was minimal due to the ranges involved. Indeed, 1.(F)/120, commanded by Major Anton Schub, was the sole Do 17 unit to take an active part, and even then it only initially had five Do 17Ps and three He 111s assigned. Two of its Dorniers were damaged by bomb splinters at Stavanger-Sola on 11 April and one was lost to flak, resulting in Leutnant Siegfried Fidorra and Oberfeldwebel Werner Sörensen being wounded. On 1 May an aircraft was damaged by gunfire on the ground at Oslo, whilst that same day at Stavanger-Sola a Do 17P was burnt out and a second Dornier damaged, again as a result of enemy shelling. Shortly thereafter, 1.(F)/120 replaced its few remaining Do 17s with He 111s, although by early 1941 it too was flying the Ju 88.

One other Do 17 unit, Oberstleutnant Hermann Edert's KüFlGr 606, carried out coastal armed reconnaissance in the seas between Germany and

A Do 17Z leads two older Do 17E/Fs in a low-level flypast at an unidentified airfield in Germany shortly after the conclusion of the Poland campaign. It is possible that these machines all belong to KG 77, which became the last *Kampfgeschwader* to switch from older Do 17E/Fs to new Z-models at Grottkau (*Stab*, I and II. *Gruppen*) and Brieg (III. *Gruppe*) in the autumn of 1939

Norway. It lost just one Z-3 during the course of the campaign, the aircraft commanded by Leutnant Walter Priebe of 3./KüFlGr 606 failing to return from a mission to the Skagerrak on 9 April. Because of the maritime nature of its role, KüFlGr 606 also operated the relatively rare Do 17Z-5. This variant was essentially a Z-3 equipped with additional flotation equipment in the form of inflatable bags that were stored in the rear of the engine nacelles and in bulges on either side of the forward fuselage immediately aft of the nose glazing. These would inflate if the aircraft was forced to ditch. The Z-5 also carried additional survival equipment for the crew, which, combined with the flotation bags, increased the variant's weight by more than 1000 lbs (to 19,000 lbs loaded) – a standard Z-2 weighed 17,920 lbs when loaded with fuel and ordnance.

Meanwhile, further south, the first nine days of May 1940 were relatively quiet, with the last reported combat prior to the launching of the *Blitzkrieg* in the West being between a Do 17P of 4.(F)/121 and by Hurricanes of No 87 Sqn south of Lunéville just after 1300 hrs on the 9th. Tasked with carrying out a last-minute photo-reconnaissance mission of French airfields near the German border, Oberleutnant Walter Riebicke and his crew (one of whom had been wounded) managed to nurse their shot-up Dornier back to their base at Gablingen.

One of their attackers, Plt Off Horatio Dunn, who had accounted for a Do 17 from the same unit on 10 November 1939, had in turn been forced to crash-land in Belgium after the radiator in his Hurricane was holed by return fire from the Dornier. This time Dunn was seriously injured when his fighter overturned near Rethel, and he was evacuated back to England and subsequently died on 1 June 1940. Nine days later Oberleutnant Riebicke, now flying with two new crewmen, was killed taking off from Mannheim-Sandhofen when his Do 17P collided with a Ju 52/3m of 1./KGr.z.b.V. 1 – in all, six aircrew perished in the accident.

CHAPTER THREE

FRANCE

Do 17Ps of 3.(F)/22 sporting a mix of camouflage schemes. The aircraft nearest to the photographer is still marked with its factory delivery codes, but the middle machine bears the unit code 4N+TL. At the start of the Battle of France 3.(F)/22 was based at Wiesbaden (where this shot was possibly taken) and commanded by Hauptmann Walter Kaasch

On 10 May 1940 the Battle of France, the initial phase being known to the Germans as *Fall Gelb* (Case Yellow), began with the invasion of France, Belgium and the Low Countries. KG 2, KG 3, KG 76 and KG 77 were all in action from the start, and all suffered losses.

Oberst Johannes Fink's KG 2 committed all three *Gruppe* in attacks against Thionville, Reims and Challerange, suffering the loss of five aircraft, with six more damaged. Eight crewmen were killed, 15 wounded and nine captured. Amongst those wounded was Major Martin Gutzmann, *Kommandeur* of I. *Gruppe*, who would eventually return to operational flying in August 1940, only to be shot down and taken prisoner on his first mission back on the 26th. The logbook of Feldwebel Heinrich Albach of 9./KG 2 shows what his recently-formed *Gruppe* did that day. He took off from Illesheim on his first mission of the war at 0429 hrs, having been told to attack Challerange. Landing back at Illesheim at 0800 hrs, Albach and his crew took off again at 0920 hrs and flew to Biblis. His final mission for the day commenced at 1315 hrs, and this time Spincourt was bombed – his Do 17 returned to base just under two hours later.

Oberst Wolfgang Chamier-Glisczinski's KG 3 was heavily committed on the opening day of *Fall Gelb* and, accordingly, suffered heavier losses than KG 2. The *Kampfgeschwader* lost 14 Do 17s, with three more damaged, during attacks on Rouvres, Mourmellon and Suippes. Fifteen aircrew were killed, 15 wounded and 21 captured. One of those to be made a PoW was

One of the first losses of the Battle of France was this Do 17Z, coded 5K+CA, of *Stab.*/KG 3. Intercepted by No 1 Sqn Hurricanes flown by Flt Lt Peter Walker, Flg Offs Mark Brown, John Kilmartin and Paul Richey and Sgt Frank Soper during a reconnaissance mission over Etain-Rouvres, it force-landed at Mont Ste Martin, north of Longwy, at 0630 hrs on 10 May 1940. Oberfeldwebeln Hans Schachtebeck and Karl Sommer and Unteroffizier Wilhelm Schmeis were captured and Unteroffizier Rolf Wagner killed

Major Wilhelm-Georg Kunowski, *Kommandeur* of III./KG 3 – command of the *Gruppe* now passed to Hauptmann Erich Rathmann.

Oberstleutnant Stefan Fröhlich's KG 76, which also attacked a number of targets, had only three of its Do 17Zs shot down, with two more being damaged. Nine aircrew were killed, four wounded and four captured. Finally, Generalmajor Wolf von Stutterheim's KG 77 suffered the least, with only one aircraft shot down and three damaged – six aircrew were killed and one wounded. Nevertheless, the loss of 23 Do 17s and two senior officers on the first day of the campaign hit the Luftwaffe hard, despite the widespread destruction the Dornier bombers had wrought on the Allies. On a more positive note, no reconnaissance Do 17s were lost on 10 May, although as the Wehrmacht's panzers advanced at pace, aerial reconnaissance became crucial and losses rose.

The second day of the campaign would not be as dramatic for the Dornier-equipped units. A Do 17P from 3.(F)/31 returned to base with damage after being shot up by the Hurricane of No 1 Sqn's Flg Off Paul Richey, and 2.(F)/123 also had an aircraft damaged in combat with French fighters near Tirelemont. Both Oberleutnant Dietrich von Schäzler and Unteroffizier Willi Klaas were wounded in the clash, although the former soon returned to operations and was subsequently killed in action when his Do 17P fell to French fighters on 7 June. 2.(F)/123 did lose a Do 17P on 11 May, however, when the aircraft commanded by Leutnant Heinz Brosch force-landed three miles south of Sittard after it was damaged by Hurricanes of No 85 Sqn. One crewman was wounded.

After the high mission tempo of 10 May, the bomber units had a less eventful day on the 11th. Nevertheless, KG 2 still had two Do 17s destroyed and 11 damaged, with three crewmen killed, eight wounded and four captured. The most senior casualty was Oberleutnant Otto Reimers, *Staffelkapitän* of 4./KG 2, his aircraft being hit by flak during the attack on Vraux airfield early that morning and crash-landing at III./JG 2's Frankfurt-Rebstock base. Reimers' wounds were serious enough

This Do 17P is from a tactical (*Heer* or H) as opposed to a strategic (*Fern* or F) reconnaissance unit. The last two letters – JH – of the fuselage code give no indication of the unit to which this aircraft was assigned. Note that the officer standing alongside the turret of the Panzer III is from the Luftwaffe

to prevent him ever returning to operations, and his *Staffel* was taken over by Oberleutnant Joachim Genzow. Formerly the *Gruppen* technical officer, he would prove himself to be a successful bomber pilot. The logbook of Feldwebel Heinrich Albach of 9./KG 2 shows that he flew just the one mission, against Ecury airfield, from 0555 hrs to 0840 hrs. Losses for the other Do 17-equipped *Geschwader* were limited to KG 76 (one aircraft damaged) and KG 77 (five aircraft damaged and five crewmen wounded).

There was one more Do 17 lost on 11 May in the form of an M-model from *Stab./Stukageschwader* (StG) 2. The aircraft, commanded by *Staffelkapitän* Oberleutnant Hans Metz, was flying in support of attacks being made that afternoon by Stukas from the same unit. The *Stab* of every *Stukageschwader* committed to *Fall Gelb* used a handful of Do 17Ms for pre-attack reconnaissance and post-strike evaluation of bombing results. Usually flying in small formations, or singly, at low-level, they would suffer notable losses during the *Blitzkrieg*, whose success relied heavily on air-to-ground attacks. Aside from the Do 17M, StG 2 lost seven Ju 87s and had three more damaged when bounced by the Hurricanes of No 87 Sqn, the Dornier probably being shot down by future aces Sqn Ldr John Dewar and Plt Off Harry Mitchell. Unteroffizier G Muschner was killed and Metz and Feldwebel Helmuth Schindler captured. The latter was subsequently killed in an air attack on Dunkirk on 30 May whilst still in captivity.

One of the most photographed wrecks from the Battle of France was Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 6036 U5+ER of 7./KG 2. Damaged by flak, it crash-landed at Ferme Griffaumont, near Izel, at 1810 hrs on 12 May. Feldwebel Willi Klöttschen, Leutnant Dietrich Giesecke, Unteroffizier Paul Tillner and Feldwebel Hans Rösl were all injured in what was clearly a violent crash-landing. Quickly captured, they were repatriated following the fall of France the following month

Reconnaissance units again suffered losses on 12 May, with a Do 17 of 3.(F)/11 commanded by Oberleutnant Helmut Müller falling to flak near Contern, southeast of Luxembourg. All three crewmen were killed. A Dornier from 1.(H)/121 almost certainly fell victim to GC II/5 and crashed near Hilbringen, killing Feldwebel Ludwig Liefländer and two crew.

The remaining loss came from 2.(F)/123 when the aircraft commanded by Oberleutnant Hans Weicksel was attacked by MS.406s from GC II/2 while carrying out a photo-reconnaissance mission of Allied road movements between Leuven and Nivelles. The Do 17P was attacked by four aircraft led by Capt Baudouin De-Calonne d'Avesnes, Wk-Nr. 0147 4N+EK crash-landing south of Fosse la Ville and Weicksel, Unteroffizier Heinz Bournot and Obergefreiter Herbert Richter captured. Although they were later repatriated following France's surrender, Weicksel was killed on 3 June 1942 when the Bf 108B-1 of *Stab*./KG 6 that he was flying in, together with the *Geschwaderkommodore*, Oberstleutnant Joachim Hahn (formerly of KüFlGr 606), and one other passenger, was shot down near Dieppe by Spitfire Vs of No 401 Sqn. Heinz Bournot would later become an officer, and he was still flying with 2.(F)/123 when it was disbanded in late 1944.

Brand new Do 17Z 5K+JT of 9./KG 3 at the *Geschwader*'s Würzburg home. Note the J code letter has been applied in *Staffel* yellow but the spinners have not been similarly painted. Almost certainly an attrition replacement, the bomber also lacks any unit insignia. III./KG 3 reported that it had 35 Do 17Z on strength (28 of which were serviceable) on the morning of 10 May 1940, which was one airframe short of a full-strength complement. KG 3 as a whole would lose 14 Do 17s on the first day of the *Fall Gelb*, hence the requirement for attrition replacements such as this aircraft

All of KG 2's casualties on 12 May came from III. *Gruppe* late in the day during low-level attacks against troops in the Sedan-Charleville area, with one aircraft being shot down and six damaged. Four crewmen were captured and five wounded.

KG 3's losses were appreciably higher, with five aircraft destroyed and three damaged as the unit also went after Allied troops – the latter were stoutly defended by French and British fighters. In all, six aircrew were killed, five wounded and seven captured. Of those killed, one was Oberst Albrecht Jahn, *Kommandeur* of II./KG 3 (he was replaced by Hauptmann Otto Pilger). Two more senior officers were wounded, namely Hauptmann Georg-Friedrich Altvater of *Stab*./KG 3 (he would subsequently be killed with 6./KG 27 on 13 December 1942) and Oberleutnant Richard Martin, *Staffelkapitän* of 4./KG 3.

By contrast, KG 76 and KG 77 endured only modest casualties on the 12th. Beobachter (observer) Leutnant Georg Gawlina of 6./KG 76 was injured when a round exploded in the gun he was firing – Gawlina would later become a pilot, and he was killed returning from an operational sortie on 25 April 1944 when serving as *Staffelkapitän* of Fw 190-equipped 3./*Schnellkampfgeschwader* 10. Four crewmen from 8./KG 77 were wounded in combat probably with Hurricanes of No 79 Sqn, their aircraft crash-landing in German territory.

13 May would see far fewer losses, with four Do 17Ps (one apiece from 3.(F) and 4.(F)/11 and single examples from 4.(F)/14 and 3.(F)/22)

RIGHT
Do 17Z 5K+AH of 1./KG 3 leads a second Dornier from the unit towards a target in northern France in mid-May 1940. The individual aircraft letter A in its fuselage code (repeated on both wingtips) denoted that this bomber would normally have been flown by the *Staffelkapitän*

Do 17Z, possibly from KG 76, releases a string of SC 50 110-lb bombs from medium altitude over France in June 1940. The Dornier could carry up to 20 of these weapons in its bomb-bay

falling to Allied fighters. Oberleutnant Rolf Sauer and two crew from the 3.(F)/22 aircraft were captured, although all three were soon repatriated. Pilot Feldwebel Kurt Kroll was later reported missing over Russia on 25 April 1942 while still serving with 3.(F)/22. KG 76 suffered two aircraft damaged with two crew wounded on the 13th, while *Stab* I./KG 77 had one Do 17Z damaged and a crewman wounded. Although both II. and III./KG 2 flew two high-level missions against troop positions in the Sedan area that afternoon and evening, all of their aircraft returned safely to Ansbach and Illesheim, respectively.

The pendulum of losses would swing the other way on the 14th, with the only Do 17P loss being suffered by 2.(F)/123 when Leutnant Georg Pilhofer and his two crew were killed when their aircraft was shot down south of Leuven by three MS.406s of GC II/2 led by Capt Jean Alexandre. The bomber units were again tasked with attacking troop positions from altitude, resulting in KG 2 losing one aircraft to flak and having four more damaged (one of these force-landed). One crewman was killed and six wounded.

The two 6./KG 2 pilots whose aircraft were brought down that day would go on to be successful both with the Do 17 and its replacement, the Do 217. Oberleutnant Gerhard Czernik force-landed near Neufchateau with a wounded Bordfunker and Oberleutnant Alfred Kindler and two of his crew were slightly wounded prior to crash-landing near St Cécile. Both men would be awarded the *Ritterkreuz*, on 16 May 1941 and 24 September 1942, respectively, with Czernik being killed in an accident on 21 October 1941 and Kindler shot down and taken prisoner on 31 July 1942.

Flak also damaged six aircraft from KG 76 when it targeted troops on 14 May, resulting in one crewman being killed and eight wounded.

In this somewhat puzzling scene, a Wehrmacht staff officer and two soldiers inspect an abandoned French army Hotchkiss H39 light tank and two badly damaged Do 17Zs from KG 76. The aircraft on its belly was marked with the individual code letter L, while the bomber lacking its glazed nose fairing and starboard engine bore the letter K on its fuselage. Both Do 17s also boasted the fuselage band and F1 code assigned to KG 76. Quite how the aircraft ended up in a rural setting like this remains unexplained

The pattern of losses now started to settle down from 15 May. Two Do 17Ps, from 2.(F)/11 and 4.(F)/14, were lost that day to fighters, with two crewmen killed and four captured. KG 2 carried out another series of high-altitude attacks, this time against both rail targets in the Challerange/Ste Menehould area and troops near Bazancourt. Three bombers were destroyed and two damaged by French and British fighters. One of the casualties was from 2./KG 2, with Unteroffizier Vincenz Giessübel and his crew being captured. On being released when France fell, Giessübel joined 2./NJG 2 and flew nightfighter missions over Britain, initially in Do 17s prior to switching to the Ju 88 in January 1942. After claiming a handful of victories, Giessübel became a fighter instructor with V./KG 40, flying day missions in the Ju 88C-6 over the Atlantic. Credited with two victories prior to returning to Ju 88-equipped 2./NJG 2 in July 1943, Giessübel undertook his 193rd, and last, operational flight on 11 May 1944.

The three other Do 17-equipped bomber *Geschwader* were also active on 15 May 1940, with II./KG 3 losing three aircraft and having two crew killed, two captured and three wounded, KG 76 suffering two losses and one damaged, with two crew killed and three wounded, and 5./KG 77 having two aircraft damaged and three crew wounded.

16 May would again see two reconnaissance aircraft shot down, with the one from 2.(F)/22 falling to a Bloch MB.152 of GC I/1 and the Do 17P from 3.(F)/31 force-landing behind Allied lines after Leutnant Eberhard Grampp and his crew became lost – they were captured. KG 2 lost two Do 17Zs and had a third bomber damaged, with one crewman killed, five wounded or injured and three captured. KG 76 had only a single Dornier shot down, but five more were damaged, with two crewmen killed and two wounded. KG 77 lost two aircraft and had a third damaged, with eight crewmen captured and two wounded.

A Do 17P from the multipurpose 'demonstration' unit 7.(H)/LG 2 was also shot down on the 16th. Commanded by Feldwebel August Schenkelberg, the aircraft was carrying out a photo-reconnaissance mission between Brussels and Vlissingen when it was intercepted over Dendermonde by MS.406s of GC III/1. The fighters, led by Lt Tony Leenhardt, set the aircraft's port fuel tank on fire, after which its crew crash-landed near Spui and were captured.

One week on from the launching of *Fall Gelb*, the Wehrmacht's advance into France showed no signs of being stopped by Allied forces. In the air,

Badly damaged Do 17Z F1+HN of 5./KG 76 is seen at Vogelsang shortly after it had been nursed back to the airfield by Unteroffizier Otto Stephani following an attack on an undisclosed target near Saint-Omer on 22 May 1940. Other aircraft from II./KG 76 were engaged that day by heavy, and accurate, flak during an attack on an ammunition dump in the Lens/Arras area, with one bomber from 6. *Staffel* being shot down and two more damaged. It would appear that F1+HN also survived a nearby flak burst, which resulted in Stephani being lightly wounded – he would spend four weeks in hospital recuperating, only to be wounded again during the low-level raid on Kenley on 18 August 1940 whilst flying with 9./KG 76

the pace of operations undertaken by the Luftwaffe in support of the invasion of the West now began to decrease. The Do 17 units remained quite active, however. On 17 May no reconnaissance aircraft were lost, and the combined losses for KG 2 and KG 3 were four Do 17Zs damaged and two crew wounded.

II./KG 76 did not escape so lightly, however, when its crews attacked various targets in the Namur/Bapaume/Cambrai and Valenciennes areas. Leutnant Erwin Moll of 4./KG 76 flew his fourth mission of the Battle of France that day, taking off from Vogelsang at 1715 hrs and landing at 1952 hrs – frustratingly, he does not record his target in his log book. II. *Gruppe* suffered three losses, with three more Do 17Zs being damaged. Six crew were killed, five wounded and three captured. III./KG 76 flew a series of low-level attacks against motorised columns near Beaumont, during which two of its aircraft were damaged by ground fire. The latter also badly wounded Beobachter Oberleutnant Helmut Neubert of 9./KG 76, and although he was rushed to Bonn-Venusberg hospital after his bomber returned to base, he died shortly afterwards.

The days that now followed showed a similar pattern in respect to Do 17 losses, with both reconnaissance and bomber units suffering high attrition one day, then hardly any the next. An unusual casualty on 20 May was Do 17M Z5+BH of *Aufklärungsstaffel I Flakkorps*, which was shot down by French flak near Reims during a reconnaissance mission. Unteroffiziere Edgar Berthold and Werner Seemann and Leutnant Siegfried Engel were captured, all of them having been wounded.

Although Do 17s were no longer being shot down at the alarmingly high rate seen during the first three days of the *Blitzkrieg* in the West, the *Kampfgeschwader* nevertheless experienced telling losses within the senior officer cadre in the final 12 days of May. On the 19th Oberleutnant Rudolf Strasser, *Staffelkapitän* of 9./KG 76, was killed. Three days later, his contemporary in 6. *Staffel*, Hauptmann Wilhelm Matuschek, also perished, and on 25 May Major Walter Hill, *Gruppenkommandeur* of II./KG 76, was wounded. The following day Major Peter-Paul Pietrusky, *Staffelkapitän* of

Do 17Z F1+FM of 4./KG 76 was regularly flown by Leutnant Erwin Moll until 1 June 1940 when, during an attack on Dunkirk, it was damaged by an RAF fighter – probably the Spitfire flown by Flt Lt Terry Webster of No 41 Sqn – and crash-landed at Haeghe-Meulen, between Ypres and Dunkirk. Moll subsequently flew with 3./KG 76 in the Battle of Britain, and he was eventually shot down flying a Ju 88A and taken prisoner on 16 April 1941. The aircraft is adorned with the 4. *Staffel* badge of Great Britain being bombed, this insignia later being used by 3./KG 76 after II. *Gruppe* had disbanded, pending conversion to the Ju 88 in July 1941

2./KG 77, was killed, and on the 27th Hauptmann Julius Schulte-Frohlinde, *Staffelkapitän* of *Stab./*KG 2, was captured. Finally, on 28 May, Hauptmann Helmut Dannewitz, *Staffelkapitän* of 8./KG 77, was also killed.

By now, the majority of the fighting in northern France was focused on the Channel coast area surrounding Calais and Dunkirk. With Allied fighter activity beginning to wane Do 17 losses also started to decrease, although there was a sharp spike in attrition on 27 May. In addition to KG 2's three aircraft lost and four damaged during attacks on harbour installations and roads between Dunkirk and Ostend on this date, KG 3 had no fewer than 12 Do 17Zs shot down (with five more damaged) during a series of raids on the evacuation beaches. In human terms, KG 2 had four aircrew captured and seven wounded, whilst KG 3 suffered ten killed and 18 wounded. The majority of the Dorniers had fallen victim to RAF Hurricanes and Spitfires.

Two Dorniers were lost on 1 June, namely the Do 17P from 1.(F)/22 commanded by Oberleutnant Kurt Opderbeck, which was shot down by a Hawk 75A of GC I/5 near Troyes during a railway traffic reconnaissance mission, and Do 17Z F1+FM of Leutnant Erwin Moll from 4./KG 76. The latter aircraft was attacked by a fighter – probably a Spitfire flown by future ace Flt Lt Terry Webster of No 41 Sqn – while bombing shipping off Dunkirk. The Dornier crash-landed at Haeghe-Meulen, between Ypres and Dunkirk. Moll and Feldwebel Ernst Mössner were both badly wounded and Unteroffiziere Hans Fortmüller and Johann Wörlein killed. Moll had been flying his tenth operational mission that day, and he did not return to the cockpit until 29 July 1940, by which time II./KG 76 was in the throes of converting to the Ju 88. He joined 3. *Staffel* instead, as I. and III./KG 76 remained Do 17-equipped until after the Battle of Britain.

The attrition amongst senior officers continued on 3 June, when KG 76 had four aircraft shot down and six damaged by French MB.152s and Belgian Fiat CR.42s during a raid on Chartres airfield. Amongst those who were casualties were Major Ludwig Schulz (wounded), *Kommandeur* of I./KG 76, Hauptmann Wolfgang Riedinger (killed), *Staffelkapitän* of 1./KG 76, and Major Franz Reuss (wounded), *Kommandeur* of III./KG 76.

Losses now decreased considerably, especially after *Fall Rot* (Case Red), the second phase of the offensive in the West, commenced on 5 June.

Generalmajor Wolf von Stutterheim of KG 77 was a highly experienced soldier prior to learning to fly. A Guards Grenadier officer before the outbreak of World War 1, von Stutterheim had served with distinction in the latter conflict and been awarded the *Pour le Mérite* ('Blue Max'), amongst other decorations – he is wearing it around his neck in this official photograph. Joining the Luftwaffe in 1935, he rose through the ranks until he became *Kommodore* of KG 77 at the end of the campaign in Poland. On 15 June 1940, von Stutterheim's Do 17Z, 3Z+AA, was shot down by French D.520 fighters from GC II/7 whilst on a mission to attack troop columns between Epinal and Thaon-les-Vosges. The Generalmajor was grievously wounded, and he eventually passed away on 3 December 1940 – von Stutterheim was the most senior Luftwaffe *Ritterkreuzträger* to be killed in action that year

Hauptmann Reinhard Liebe-Piderit, *Staffelkapitän* of 3(F)/123, poses in front of a Do 17P at Gelnhausen. After successfully leading his *Staffel* in Poland and throughout the Battle of France, he was killed at Toussus-Buc on 19 July 1940 in a flying accident while at the controls of the actual Blériot IX that Louis Blériot had used to cross the Channel on 25 July 1909. This historic machine had been found in a hangar at 3(F)/123's Toussus-Buc base shortly after the unit had arrived here from Germany, Do 17 groundcrew quickly setting about getting the relic flying once again. Liebe-Piderit and mechanic Gefreiter Edmund Thiel had both been gravely injured when the aircraft crashed shortly after take-off, with the former passing away the following day

Two days later, Hauptmann Joachim Willigmann, *Staffelkapitän* of 8./KG 2 was badly injured in a take-off accident when his Do 17Z collided with a stationary Ju 52/3m at Kinchberg-Maisborn. Hauptmann Herbert Böhm, *Staffelkapitän* of 5.(F)/122, was wounded on 11 June, and on the 15th KG 77 suffered the loss of its *Kommodore*, Generalmajor Wolf von Stutterheim – the most senior Do 17 casualty of the whole campaign. Assigned to the crew of *Stabstaffel* Do 17Z 3Z+AA, his bomber was participating in an attack on French troop columns between Epinal and Thaon-les-Vosges when it was engaged by five Dewoitine D.520s from GC II/7 west of Neufchâteau. The bomber crash-landed near Leuville, after which von Stutterheim, who had been grievously wounded, was treated in a field hospital at St Dizier and then flown to Berlin the following day. He eventually succumbed to his wounds on 3 December 1940.

Von Stutterheim would be awarded the *Ritterkreuz* on 4 July 1940, as would Generalmajor Stefan Fröhlich of KG 76. Oberst Johannes Fink of KG 2 had been the first Do 17 *Kommodore* to receive the *Ritterkreuz* on 20 June, whilst Oberst Wolfgang Chamier Glizczinski of KG 3 had to wait until 6 October to get his. All Battle of France Do 17 *Kommodoren* would be suitably rewarded for the efforts of their respective *Geschwader* during this fiercely contested campaign.

In addition to the aircraft of Generalmajor von Stutterheim, two more Do 17s were lost by KG 77 on 15 June (with a total of three aircrew killed, one wounded and five captured). That same day, 1.(H)/21 had a Do 17P downed and three crew killed, KG 2 also had an aircraft shot down and three more damaged, KG 3 had one Do 17Z damaged and a crewman killed and KG 76 had a solitary bomber damaged and a crewman wounded.

The following day brought the final Do 17 combat losses of the campaign when a P-model of 3.(F)/22 was damaged by ground fire northwest of Dijon and then set upon by two MS.406s of GC I/6. The crew succeeded in making it back to base, with Unteroffizier Fritz Hein being slightly wounded. At 1500 hrs Do 17P 4U+EK of 2.(F)/123 had the misfortune of being caught in the middle of an audacious strafing attack by D.520s of GC III/3 on Auxerre airfield just as the aircraft was coming in to land. The Dornier collided with three Bf 109Es from 1./JG 27 before it came to a halt on top of one of the 'Emils'. Although all four aircraft were written-off, there were no casualties amongst the crew.

The Battle of France had been a true baptism of fire for the Do 17 and its crews, with many of the latter flying a high number of often hazardous sorties. Feldwebel Heinrich Albach of 9./KG 2 was one of the luckier *Kampfflieger*, for he completed 33 missions between 10 May and 19 June and his Do 17 suffered combat damage only once, on 15 May. Conversely, Feldwebel Georg Brendebach of 5./KG 2 flew just three missions between 13 and 18 May, before being temporarily transferred to a Ju 52/3m unit as an attrition replacement following the horrendous losses in aircrew suffered by the *Luftlandekorps*' 7. *Fliegerdivision* on 11 May. He returned to 5./KG 2 on 29 May, after which he flew another five missions until 11 June. By the end of 1940, Albach's total of Do 17 missions stood at 71 and Brendebach's 32 – a sign of the intensity of operations over both France and England during a seven-month period that saw the Dornier's effectiveness as a frontline bomber steadily decline.

With Paris in German hands from 14 June 1940, it was safe for Do 17P 4U+HL of 3.(F)/123 to overfly the French capital from its new home at Toussus-Buc airfield. The aircraft is painted in the darker camouflage scheme that was increasingly favoured by all Do 17 units as the war progressed

MAKESHIFT NIGHTFIGHTER

Just as the campaign in France was coming to an end, Major Wolfgang Falck of *Zestörergeschwader* 1 was tasked with forming a dedicated nightfighter unit for the nocturnal defence of the *Reich*. Although the preferred aircraft for what would become *Nachtjagdgeschwader* (NJG) 1 upon its formation on 22 June 1940 was the Bf 110, two versions of the Do 17 (the Z-7 *Kauz I* and Z-10 *Kauz II*) were initially employed as nightfighters. Do 17Z-3 airframes selected for conversion into Z-7s had their glazed noses replaced with the solid nose of a Ju 88C-1/2 'heavy' fighter, complete with its armament of three 7.9 mm MG 17 machine guns and one 20 mm MG FF cannon.

The Z-7 was soon found to be operationally compromised in respect to its armament, resulting in an entirely new nose being designed that housed four machine guns and two cannon. In the tip of the nose was an infra-red spotlight called *Spanner-Anlage* that was subsequently replaced by first-generation FuG 202 *Liechtenstein* radar. The revised aircraft was designated the Do 17Z-10. The precise number of surplus Z-3 airframes modified into Z-7s and Z-10s is hard to define. It is thought that, initially, eight Z-7s were produced, and the survivors were later converted into Z-10s, with around 11 of the latter reaching NJG 1 – a small number of Z-10s were also passed onto NJG 2 following its formation in September 1940.

The Z-7 initially entered service with I./NJG 1 on or about 22 June, with the type's first recorded combat coming one week later during the early hours of the 29th when the crew of a Whitley bomber of No 58 Sqn, flown by Plt Off Bill Espley (who had only joined the unit five days earlier), reported damaging a nightfighter near Eindhoven. The Do 17Z-7 (some records state that it was a Bf 110) flown by Unteroffizier Hugo Schwarz of 1./NJG 1 later crash-landed near the unit's Mönchengladbach airfield. All three crew were wounded, and although Schwarz and Feldwebel Gerhard Palm duly recovered, Feldwebel Ludwig Born later died.

CHAPTER FOUR

BATTLE OF BRITAIN

Shortly after dawn on morning 11 July 1940, Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2542 U5+GM of 4./KG 2 was intercepted off Harwich by the Hurricane of No 85 Sqn's CO, Sqn Ldr Peter Townsend. In the ensuing combat, the latter was shot down and eventually rescued, while the Do 17 limped back to crash-land at Mory. Oberleutnant Joachim Genzow was the only member of the four-man crew to avoid being wounded in this engagement

Although, officially, the Battle of Britain did not start until 10 July 1940, the Do 17 had made its first appearance en masse over and off England exactly one week earlier. By now, the only bomber units exclusively equipped with the aircraft in the West were KG 2 and KG 3. II./KG 76 was in the process of converting to the Ju 88 and KG 77 would start its conversion to the Junkers twin-engined bomber later that same month.

It was, therefore, a blow to the latter *Kampfgeschwader* that on its very last day of Do 17 operations (3 July) the unit had four aircraft shot down and one damaged. 1. *Staffel* lost Oberleutnant Kurt Steiner and his crew, 2. *Staffel* lost Feldwebel Richard Saft and his crew and 8. *Staffel* had two Do 17s destroyed, with Unteroffizier Richard Brandes and his Bordfunker being captured and the remaining two crew killed, while Feldwebel Werner Patrzich and his crew all perished. 9. *Staffel*'s Oberleutnant Hermann Kapsch and his crew nursed their bomber back to France, despite all of them having been wounded.

Stab./KG 2 also had a Do 17Z very badly damaged that same day, the bomber landing at Marquise with Oberfeldwebel Günter Wagner and his Bordfunker wounded (possibly by Plt Off Peter Litchfield of No 610 Sqn). Finally, the Dornier flown by Oberleutnant Wolfgang Chrapkowski of 3./KG 3 came down in the Channel. There were no survivors.

These losses were inflicted off the south coast by Hurricanes from Nos 32 (one Do 17 destroyed), 43 (one Do 17 damaged) and 56 Sqns

(one Do 17 destroyed) and Spitfires from Nos 610 (one Do 17 damaged and another unconfirmed) and 616 Sqns (one Do 17 destroyed and one unconfirmed). Of the aircraft lost, the only one to come down on land was Wk-Nr. 2642 3Z+GS, flown by Unteroffizier Richard Brandes of 8./KG 77. It had already dropped six 110-lb bombs on RAF Kenley when the bomber was intercepted by Plt Off Peter Gardner and Sgts William Higgins and Edward Bayley of No 32 Sqn over Tonbridge, Kent. Gardner submitted the following combat report;

An airman inspects the shattered cockpit of the first Do 17Z to crash in Britain, Wk-Nr. 2642 3Z+G of 8./KG 77, shortly after it came to rest in a hop field at Paddock Wood, Kent, at 1705 hrs on 3 July 1940. It had been intercepted by Plt Off Peter Gardner and Sgts William Higgins and Edward Bayley of No 32 Sqn as the bomber flew over Tonbridge on its way home after attacking Kenley airfield. Two of the four-man crew were killed and two captured. The distinctive KG 77 badge is visible here, with the banner above it reading '*Ich will dasz si vorfechten*' ('I want them to open the fight')

'Visibility very good but interrupted by cloud. I was No 2 of Blue Section and saw the enemy aircraft flying west. I broke away from the formation, hoping my leader would follow me, but he did not. I chased him amongst the clouds, firing intermittently. He finally emerged from a cloud bank, and when I saw him he was pursued by two other Hurricanes. I joined in and we all attacked several times. He finally crashed in Paddock Wood. The gunner had been killed in my first burst, but the gun was taken up by another member of the crew who fired throughout the action. Sgt Bayley, who was firing after me, finally put the last burst into it. No outstanding damage was done, the engines were not stopped, being protected by armoured plating – they were only slowed down by having the propellers riddled.'

Gardner's first attack had indeed killed Unteroffizier Walter Theilig, after which the bomber made for the clouds. Subsequent attacks damaged the aircraft so badly that it crash-landed near Paddock Wood, killing Obergefreiter Erich Hofmann. Brandes and Oberleutnant Hans-Georg Galion were captured, having been wounded.

RAF aircraft recognition was generally not good at the start of the Battle of Britain, with the Do 17 being regularly confused with the Bf 110 and, understandably, the far rarer Do 215 (essentially a DB 601-engined Do 17 built for export). For example, two Do 17s were claimed destroyed and one damaged on 1 July 1940, with another destroyed the following day. In reality, none were lost on either day, although reconnaissance unit 3./*Aufklärungsgruppe Oberbefehlshaber der Luftwaffe* had two Do 215s shot down on the 1st.

With KG 77 now returning to Illesheim and Fürstenfeldbruck to start converting to the Ju 88, its part in the Do 17 story was over after having flown the aircraft operationally for a mere ten months. There would be a series of convoy attacks on the days leading up to 10 July, specifically on the 4th, 7th, 8th and 9th. The only casualties suffered by the Do 17 units were two aircraft from II./KG 2 damaged in combat on 4 July and another from III. *Gruppe* damaged on the 7th.

During these missions KG 2 crews were credited with sinking or damaging a number of ships, specifically 2000-ton freighters on 4 and 7 July (nothing was lost on the latter date), damaging a 3000-ton freighter and a 5000-ton transport vessel on the 8th and sinking a 10,000-ton tanker and three freighters of 3000-4000 tons, 5000 tons and 6000 tons on the 9th. The latter date also saw damage inflicted on four freighters of 3000 tons, 4000 tons (two ships) and 6000s ton. These claims were wildly over-optimistic, and in reality only two ships totalling 2350 tons had in fact been damaged. Convoy attacks would continue the following day.

Regular reconnaissance flights were still being flown in July 1940, although like KG 77, many of the Do 17P units were now in the midst of converting to the Ju 88. For example, in the period 3-10 July, the only pure Do 17 units assigned to *Luftflotte* 3 appear to be 2.(F*)*/123 and 3.(F)/31, for 4.(F)/121 and 1.(F)/123 were by then in the throes of converting to the Ju 88. *Stab./*StG 3 certainly flew the odd mission with the Do 17, although it appears to have had more He 111s on strength.

The mixed nature of these reconnaissance units in respect to their equipment is reflected in the logbook of Feldwebel Werner Breese of 5.(F*)*/122. He flew 15 operational missions in the Battle of France in the Do 17 and then completed two more sorties with the Dornier over Britain on 14 and 23 July, prior to undertaking his first training flight in a Ju 88 on 6 August. Breese participated in one more operational flight with the Do 17 on 16 August, and from 14 September he exclusively flew in the Ju 88. Leutnant Friedrich Brinckmann from the same unit would fly his first mission of the war on 20 July in the Ju 88. However, he had completed three sorties in the Do 17 by 4 October and seven in the

The Do 17Z cockpit, looking forward. The pilot occupies his seat to the left and the Beobachter (observer) is on the right, with a forward-firing MG 15 immediately ahead of him, protruding through the windscreen. The Bordfunker (radio operator) is sat directly behind the pilot, and this photograph would have been taken by the fourth crewman, the Bordmechaniker (flight engineer), who also doubled as the rear gunner – a second gunner was often carried for the ventral weapon. It was a cramped environment for up to five crewmen

Ju 88 by 13 October, after which the Dornier fails to get another mention in his logbook.

On the day the Battle of Britain officially commenced, a Do 17P-1 from 4.(F)/121 was tasked with carrying out a reconnaissance mission over Oxford-Portsmouth-Isle of Wight-Swindon. The aircraft was badly damaged by fighters, returning with its observer, Oberleutnant Otto Somborn, dead and Gefreiter Willi Fränzis wounded. However, *Luftflotte* 3 reports that this aircraft, which took off at 0500 hrs and landed at 0800 hrs, carried out a reconnaissance of Worthy Down airfield, in Hampshire, and that it was a Do 17P from 1.(F)/123 that returned with 250 bullet holes in the fuselage, a dead observer and a wounded Bordfunker.

The gunner's position looking aft, dominated by a single 7.92 mm MG 15 machine gun. Four magazines can be seen stored neatly on the shelf immediately below the weapon. The gunner's seat is in the foreground, its headrest having been cranked over to the right to improve the photographer's field of view

Irrespective of which unit this Do 17P was actually assigned to, it is believed that the aircraft was the first casualty of the Battle of Britain. The Dornier had been intercepted by future aces Flt Lt Roy Dutton and Plt Offs Mike Newling and Bob Yule of Hurricane-equipped No 145 Sqn off Southampton at 0510 hrs. This was followed by a Do 17Z of 4./KG 3, which was shot down off the Norfolk coast by three Spitfires of No 66 Sqn. Although Oberleutnant Hilmar Bott successfully landed in the sea and at least three of his crew were seen alive in the water, none survived.

That afternoon, 26 Do 17s of I./KG 2 and an identical number from III./KG 2 attacked a convoy codenamed *Bread* south of Dover. Feldwebel Heinrich Albach of 9./KG 2 noted that he took off on his 36th mission of the war at 1350 hrs and landed exactly two hours later. The *Geschwader* claimed to have sunk three freighters totalling 21,000 tons and damaged three more totalling 19,000 tons. In reality, just the 466-ton *Bill S* was lost that afternoon.

RAF fighters managed to intercept the bombers and claim three Do 17s destroyed and four damaged, as well as eight of the escorting Bf 109s and Bf 110s destroyed, eight damaged and two unconfirmed destroyed. German claims were 14 Spitfires and seven Hurricanes shot down, although RAF losses were three Hurricanes and a Spitfire damaged and one Hurricane missing. The latter aircraft was being flown by Flg Off Tom Higgs of No 111 Sqn when it collided with the Do 17 of Hauptmann Walter Krieger, *Staffelkapitän* of 3./KG 2. Details of Higgs' demise were recorded by Sqn Ldr John Thompson, CO of No 111 Sqn;

'At about 1340 hrs the squadron was ordered to patrol between Dover and Folkestone before landing at Hawkinge, and to intercept an enemy raid that was approaching a convoy just off Dover. At approximately 1400 hrs we observed a large formation of Do 215s [sic] (*text continues on page 47*)

COLOUR PLATES

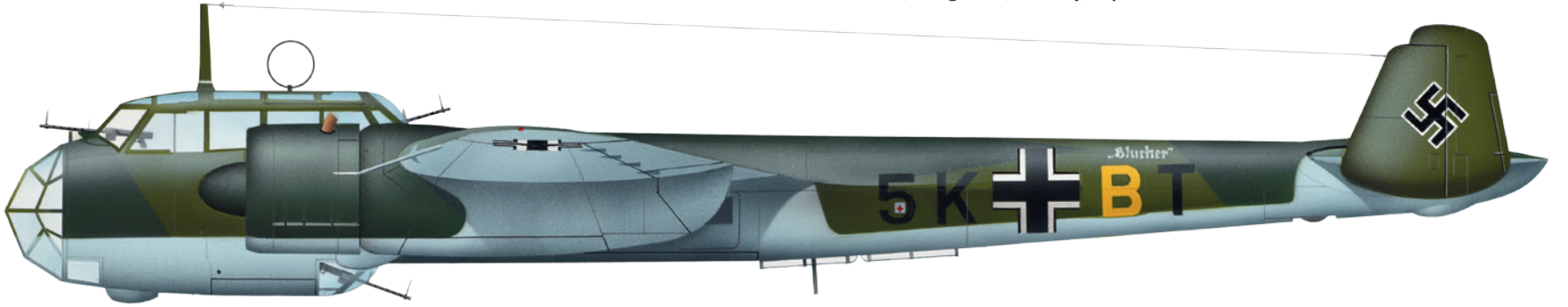
1
Do 17F-1 40+M11 of 1.(F)/124, Wiener-Neustadt, Austria, 1938

2
Do 17E-1 54+A25 of 5./KG 255, Leipheim, Germany, 1938

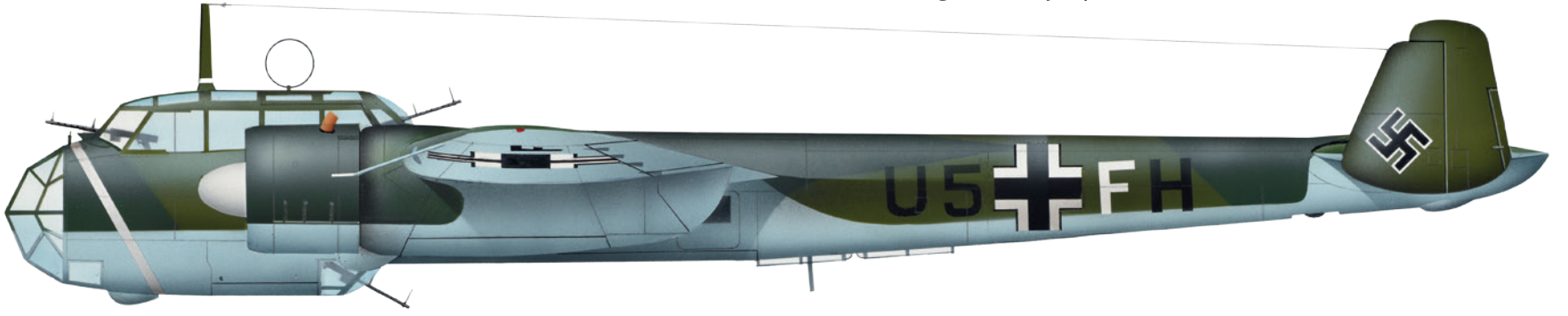
3
Do 17F 27-14 of A/88, La Cenia, Spain, 1938

4
Do 17P A6+AH of 1.(F)/120, Heiligenbeil, Germany, September 1939

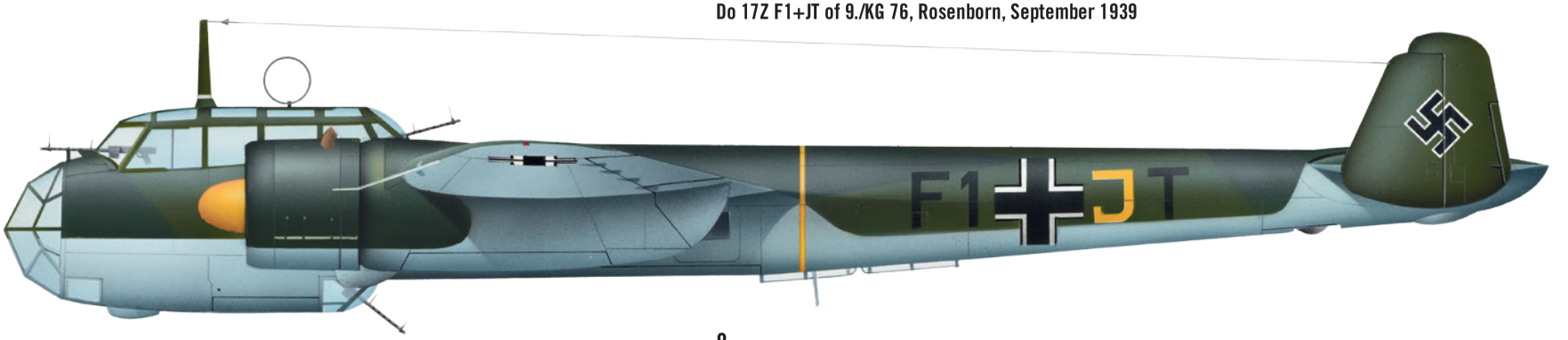
5
Do 17Z 5K+BT of 9./KG 3, Heiligenbeil, Germany, September 1939



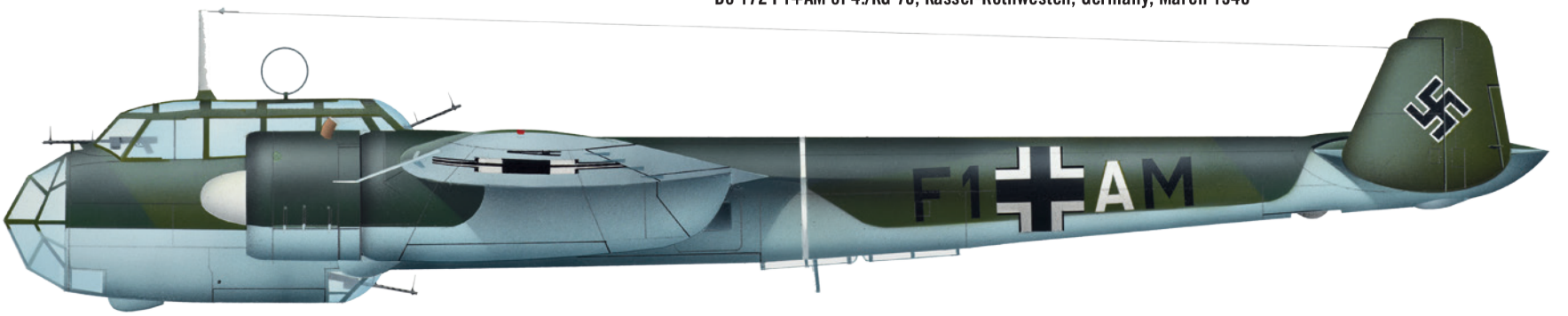
6
Do 17Z U5+FH of 1./KG 2, Liegnitz, Germany, September 1939



7
Do 17Z F1+JT of 9./KG 76, Rosenborn, September 1939



8
Do 17Z F1+AM of 4./KG 76, Kassel-Rothwesten, Germany, March 1940



9
Do 17M Z5+BH of *Aufklärungsstaffel I Flakkorps,* airfield unknown, May 1940

10
Do 17P 5D+IL of 3.(F)/31, airfield unknown, May 1940

11
Do 17P 4N+TL of 3.(F)/22, Wiesbaden, Germany, May 1940

12
Do 17Z 3Z+AK of 2./KG 77, Werl, Germany, May 1940

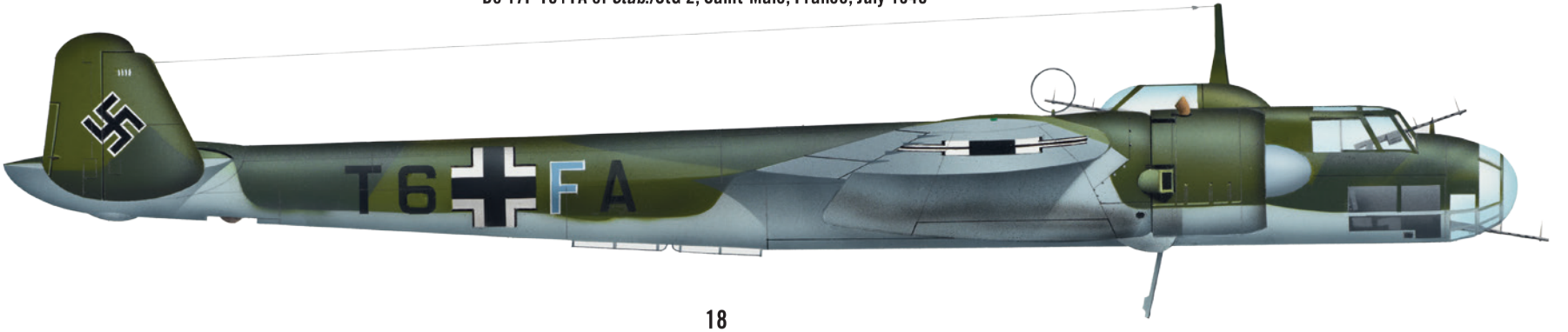
13
Do 17Z 5K+GK of 2./KG 3, Laon-Couvron, France, June 1940

14
Do 17Z 5K+BA of *Stab.*/KG 3, Würzberg, Germany, May 1940

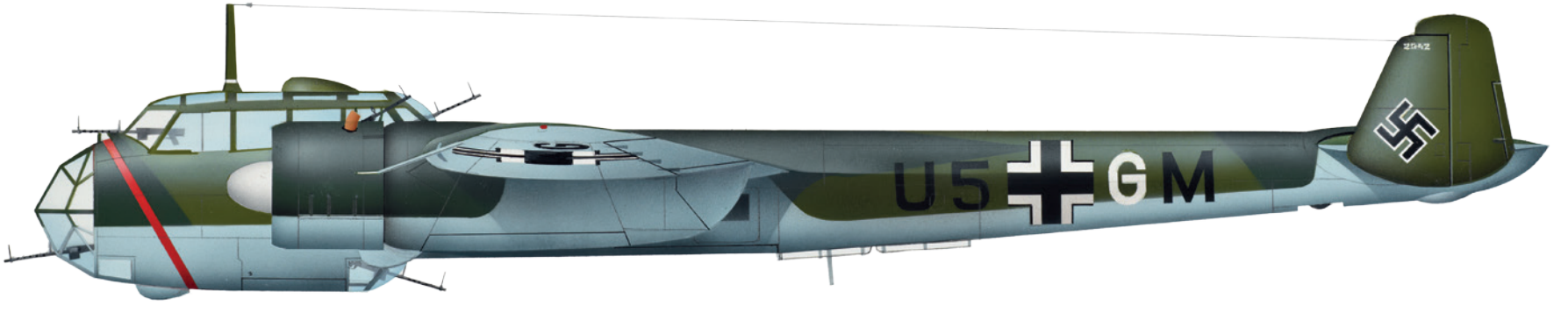
15
Do 17P 4U+HK of 2.(F)/123, Mönchengladbach, Germany, May 1940

16
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2642 3Z+GS of 8./KG 77, Cormeilles-en-Vexin, France, July 1940

17
Do 17P T6+FA of *Stab.*/StG 2, Saint-Malo, France, July 1940

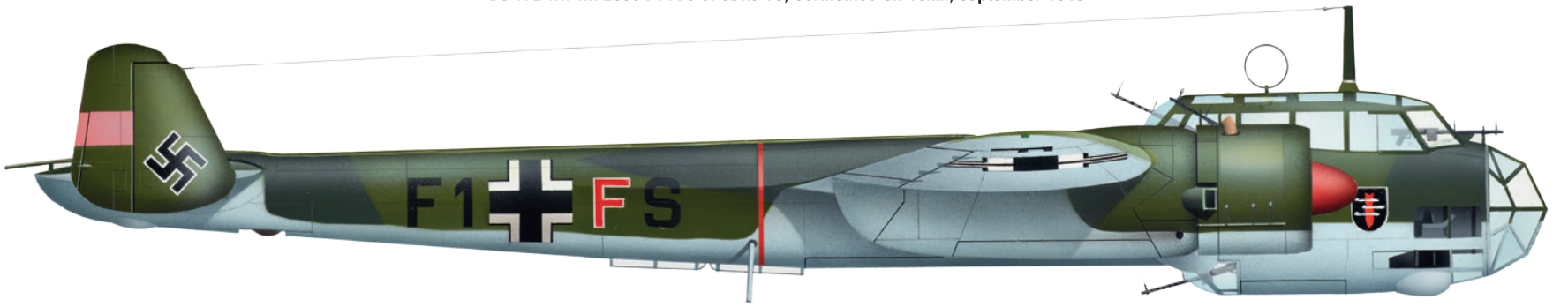


18
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2542 U5+GM of 4./KG 2, Saint-Léger, France, July 1940

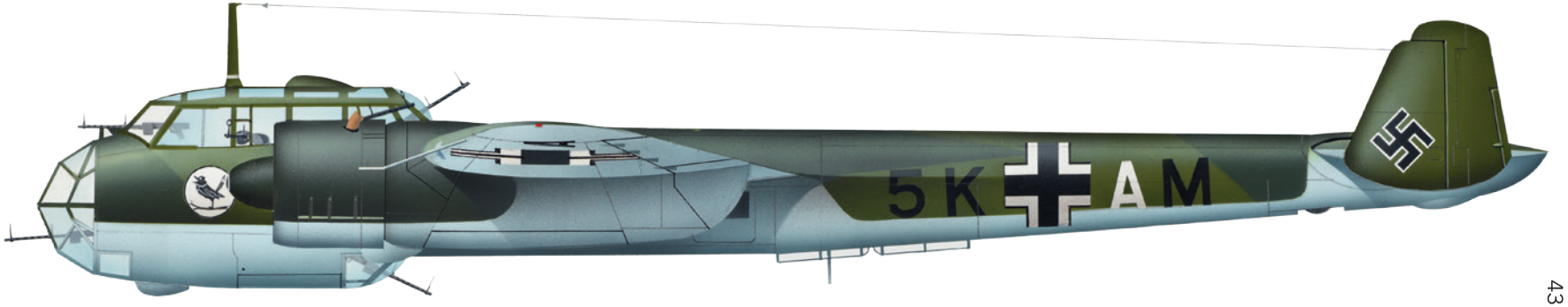


19
Do 17Z-3 F1+CT of 9./KG 76, Cormeilles-en-Vexin, August 1940

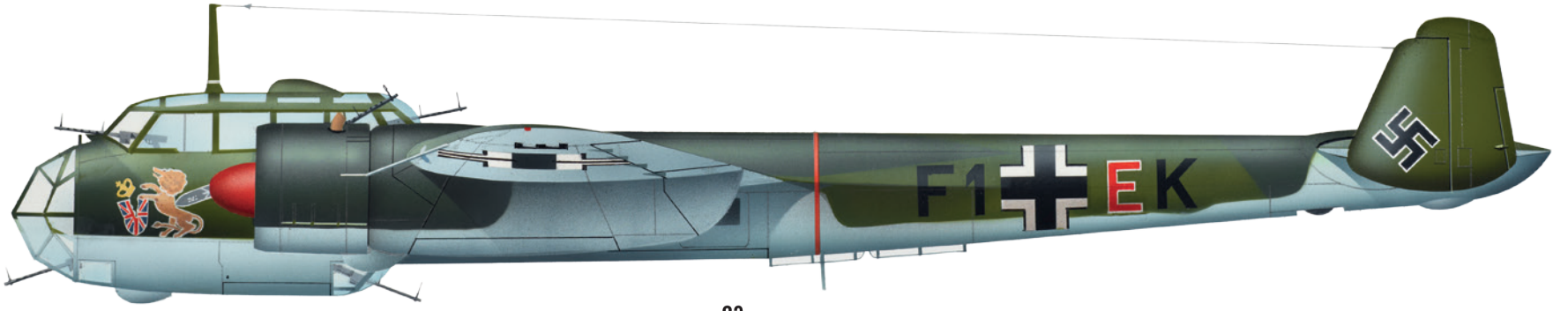
20
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2555 F1+FS of 9./KG 76, Cormeilles-en-Vexin, September 1940



21
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2879 5K+AM of 4./KG 3, Antwerp-Deurne, Belgium, September 1940



22
Do 17Z F1+EK of 2./KG 76, Beauvais, France, September 1940



23
Do 17Z F1+?R of 7./KG 76, Cormeilles-en-Vexin, France, October 1940

24
Do 17Z 5K+?T of 9./KG 3, Sint-Truiden, Belgium, November 1940

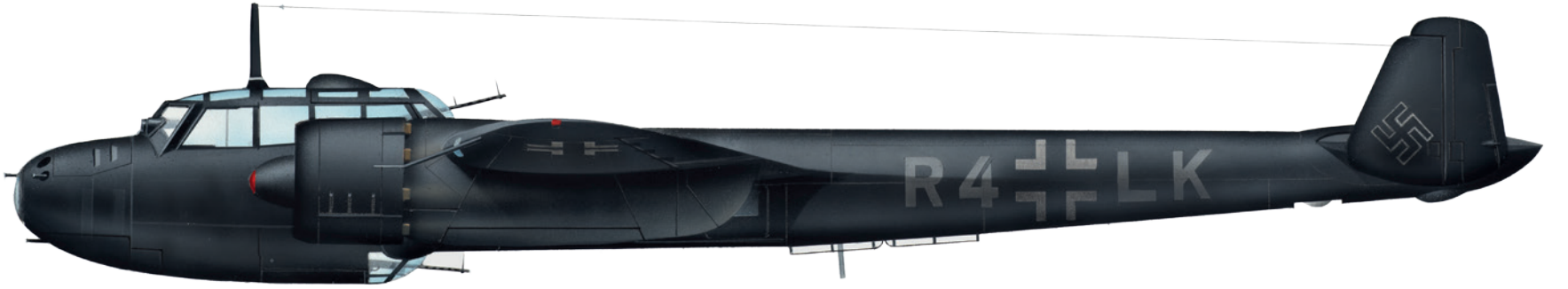
25
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2787 7T+HH of 1./ KüFlGr 606, Brest, France, October 1940

26
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 3326 5K+GT of 9./KG 3, Kozani, Greeze, April 1941

27
Do 17Z U5+AD of *Stab* III./KG 2, Athens, Greece, April 1941

28
Do 17Z 5K+HT of 9./KG 3, Dubowo, Poland, June 1941

29
Do 17Z R4+LK of 2./NJG 2, Gilze-Rijen, the Netherlands, November 1940



30
Do 17P K7+FK of 2. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel*, Dubowo, Poland, July 1941

One of the first casualties of the Battle of Britain was this Do 17Z of 2/KG 2. Damaged by RAF fighters during an attack on the convoy codenamed *Bread* off Dover on 10 July 1940, it was crash-landed by Leutnant Heinz Ermecke in France with dead Beobachter, Feldwebel Rudolf Schmidt, on board. Ermecke can be seen here, hands on hips, closest to the camera staring at the hastily camouflaged Dornier, and in front of him is Unteroffizier Götz-Dieter Wolf. Having survived this baptism of fire on their first operational mission as a crew, Ermecke and Wolf would be shot down again on 21 August 1940 by three Hurricanes from No 242 Sqn, crashing at Starston, in Norfolk. Although Wolf and two crewmen were captured, Ermecke was killed

approaching. I immediately ordered the squadron to stand by to attack, and dived to attack these enemy aircraft.

'Whilst the attack was in progress, several members of the squadron observed a Hurricane come into collision with a Do 215. Both aircraft dived out of control towards the sea, but it was not observed whether the pilot of the Hurricane escaped by parachute.

'On landing at Hawkinge it was subsequently discovered that Flg Off Higgs was the only missing member, so it must be presumed that it was his Hurricane which collided with the Do 215.'

The Do 17 hit the sea just off the Dungeness Roads Buoy, with Krieger and one of his crew surviving to become PoWs, whilst Tom Higgs' body was washed ashore in Holland on 15 August. In addition to the downing of two Bf 110s, other Do 17 losses included one from 1./KG 2, which landed on the coast at Marquise badly damaged with Obergefreiter Georg Kröhl and one of his crew wounded and one killed. A Dornier from 2./KG 2 flown by Leutnant Heinz Ermecke also managed to crash-land on the coast with a dead observer, whilst a second Do 17Z from the *Staffel* returned to base with two wounded crew. Finally, the aircraft flown by Feldwebel Peter Broich from 3./KG 2 limped home with one dead and one wounded crewman. Broich, who was subsequently awarded the *Ritterkreuz* in September 1942, continued to fly operationally until the last days of the war.

On 11 July Do 17 operations appear to have been limited to coastal reconnaissance missions due to inclement weather. At 0555 hrs Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2542 U5+GM of 4./KG 2 took off from Saint-Léger on an armed reconnaissance off the English east coast. On board were Oberleutnant Joachim Genzow, Leutnant Walter Bornschein, Oberfeldwebel Werner Borner and Feldwebel Friedrich Lohrer. The weather was poor – low cloud and drizzle – which suited the crew of the Dornier, who, in a break in cloud, dropped their bombs on shipping off Lowestoft. Turning for home, they were now horrified to see a lone Hurricane bearing down on them.

II./KG 3 adorned its Do 17Zs with a series of interesting *Gruppe* and *Staffel* badges during 1939-40. II. *Gruppe*'s singing bird insignia can be seen on the nose of this machine at Antwerp-Deurne, with a far more malevolent winged creature – holding a bomb in its talons – adorning the aircraft's port engine nacelle. This was the striking emblem of 5./KG 3

Future ace Sqn Ldr Peter Townsend, CO of No 85 Sqn, had taken off from Martlesham Heath, in Suffolk, in Hurricane P2716/VY-K at 0530 hrs on a lone patrol. Vectored towards an unidentified plot, he soon spotted the aircraft in the gloom and identified it as a Do 17. In his book *Duel of Eagles*, Townsend, who had contacted Werner Borner post-war, related what happened next;

'He [Werner Borner] grabbed his MG 15 and opened fire. His bright red tracer came darting towards me and I remember thinking "It's too early to fire". I had to get closer. Then I pressed the tit and things warmed up in the Dornier. "Pieces of metal and other fragments were flying everywhere" said Werner. One of the ammunition drums was hit and bounced onto Werner's knees. Then Leutnant Bornschein, on the starboard rear gun, was hit in the head and fell to the floor of the cabin. A second later Feldwebel Lohrer collapsed on top of him, wounded in the head and throat. Blood was everywhere.

'Only Werner was now left to shoot it out with me. As he reached for a new drum of ammunition, there was a violent explosion just above his head and he saw three fragments whip past Genzow's head, missing it by a fraction and smashing the windscreen.'

The No 85 Sqn Operations Record Book (ORB) details how the clash ended;

'Sqn Ldr Townsend intercepted a Dornier. The latter turned for home and safety, and having the height over the interceptor was drawing away. Sqn Ldr Townsend gave up the idea of trying to manoeuvre for a favourable position to attack and attacked from astern. He had got in a couple of bursts when he stopped cannon rounds in his glycol tank and inside the cockpit.'

Borner saw the Hurricane drop away trailing smoke as the Do 17 headed for home. Aside from the three crewman that were wounded, the Dornier had suffered 220 hits. When the bomber's undercarriage refused to extend Genzow was forced to crash-land at Mory, just off the airfield. By then, Sqn Ldr Townsend had bailed out, and after a ten-minute swim he was rescued by a trawler that landed him at Harwich. He was back with his squadron later that afternoon.

There were two other Do 17 losses on 11 July, with the first to fall being a *Wekusta* 26 machine flown by Unteroffizier Karl Haase that failed to return from a dawn mission along the East Anglia coast. The aircraft, and its crew, had fallen victim to the Hurricane of future ace Sqn Ldr Douglas Bader, CO of No 242 Sqn. The Do 17P-1 of 2.(F)/11's Feldwebel Erich Möckel was shot down by Hurricanes from No 601 Sqn south of the Isle of Wight shortly after 0800 hrs, with its crew being killed. A Do 17Z of 1./KG 3 was also damaged that morning when it was attacked by two Spitfires from No 66 Sqn while trying to target shipping

off Great Yarmouth. The bomber, with the wounded Borfunker Leutnant Hans Fischer on board, successfully returned to base.

It would appear that for the remainder of July, Do 17 bombers carried out armed reconnaissance missions and the occasional convoy attack. Feldwebel Georg Brendebach of 5./KG 2, for example, participated in an armed reconnaissance of Britain's east coast on 12 July and attacked a convoy 12 days later. Losses for KG 2 were understandably light, with two aircraft of 5. *Staffel* (including the Do 17Z flown by the *Staffelkapitän*, Hauptmann Erich Machetzki) lost to RAF fighters on 12 July. Five more suffered varying degrees of damage, again inflicted by British fighters, on 17, 20, 24 and 29 July. Personnel casualties for KG 2 during this period were eight missing, one killed and four wounded.

KG 3 suffered just the one combat loss in late July, Leutnant Bruno Kahlfuss of 2./KG 3 ditching in the North Sea on the 23rd after being attacked by a Hurricane from No 242 Sqn – Kahlfuss and his crew were rescued the following day. KG 76 lost an aircraft from 3. *Staffel* in a night attack on Rochford airfield on 26 July, with Unteroffizier Friedrich Hartz and his crew listed as missing. Three days later, the *Kommandeur* of III./KG 76, Oberstleutnant Adolf Genth, was mortally wounded by RAF fighters during what was described as a 'nuisance attack on the Vickers aircraft factory' on the south coast.

There were other Do 17 losses from various non-bomber units in July too, and these occurred as far north as Aberdeen and as far west as Dorset. The aircraft involved were from 2.(F)/123 (shot down on the 13th off the Dorset coast, with Oberleutnant Max Graf von Kesselstadt becoming a PoW and the remaining two crew being killed); 4.(F)/121 (shot down on the 19th into Channel, with Unteroffizier Rupprecht Roos and two crew killed); 1.(F)/120 (shot down on the 20th off Aberdeen, with Leutnant Hubert Heuer and three crew killed); 4.(F)/14 (shot down on the 21st at Blandford, in Dorset, with Feldwebel Fritz Böhnen and two crew captured) and 4.(F)/121 (shot down into the Channel on 22 July, with Leutnant Gert Bormann captured and two killed).

The 4.(F)/14 aircraft was downed by Hurricanes from No 238 Sqn, with aircraft commander Leutnant Georg Thiel providing the author with the following account of the mission;

'We had taken off from Villacoublay, refuelled at Cherbourg and crossed the Channel at a height of between 5500 m and 6500 m [18,000 ft and 22,000 ft]. This was [the] absolute ceiling of our [worn out] Do 17[M]. After crossing the coast, I began filming as ordered. However, somewhere north of Southampton we got our first Spitfire [sic]/Hurricane salvo and dived down to hide in clouds. However, the oxygen system had been hit and the port engine had stopped and was burning.

9./KG 76 sported a series of insignia during 1940, with this particular aircraft at the unit's Cormeilles-en-Vexin home featuring a French cockerel being bombed while pinned down by the Eiffel Tower. The emblem was subsequently replaced by 5./KG 76's badge (three yellow arrows on a red and white shield)

'We lost height, tumbling down out of the clouds, and then got hit again. Unteroffizier Werner, the rear gunner, was clearly not able to ward off the RAF fighters with a single MG 15 machine gun. The pilot, Feldwebel Bohnen, was unconscious for some time, but anyhow we managed a crash-landing and got out of our "bird", which was by then in flames.'

An unidentified crew from KüFlGr 606 rest in front of Do 17Z-5 at either Lannion or Brest during the Battle of Britain. The distinctive bulge on the nose of the aircraft housed the bomber's port floatation device – there was a similar blister on the starboard side. The specialist unit would enjoy some notable successes during the campaign flying from its bases on the Brittany coast

Two of the remaining three Do 17s lost in July came from *Stukageschwader* units, these aircraft flying weather and photo-reconnaissance sorties in advance of Ju 87 missions. Feldwebel Alois Greil and two crew from *Stab./*StG 77 were posted missing in their Do 17M on 18 July in unknown circumstances, and *Stab./*StG 1 had an aircraft shot down on 25 July at Fleet, in Dorset, with Feldwebel Bernhard Erdmann and one other captured and the third crewman killed.

The remaining Dornier loss in July came during the afternoon of the 23rd when, at 1234 hrs, the first of seven Do 17Zs from KüFlGr 606 took off from Kiel-Holtenau on what was described as a reconnaissance patrol over the North Sea towards the Scottish coast. The second aircraft to depart was 7T+BH from 1./KüFlGr 606, crewed by Leutnant-zur-See Otto-Hermann Geschke, Unteroffizier Helmut Germann, Oberfeldwebel Erich Trampler and Unteroffizier Werner Olson. Because of the nature of the maritime operations carried out by this unit, its Do 17 crews invariably included a Naval Observer – in this case, Geschke.

The first aircraft landed back at 1743 hrs and the sixth at 1817 hrs – there was no sign of 7T+BH. A clue as to what had happened to it would have come from the action of the previous day when 15 aircraft from KüFlGr 606 had taken off on an armed reconnaissance and the Do 17Z commanded by Leutnant-zur-See Horst Felber of 2./KüFlGr 606, coded 7T+GK, reported attacking a convoy and then being chased by three 'Spitfires' at 0555 hrs. The bomber was hit 50 times, slightly wounding Unteroffizier Furchert. The 'Spitfires' were in fact three Hurricanes of No 46 Sqn flown by Plt Off Peter McGregor, Sgt Gerald Edworthy and Sgt Ernest Bloor that intercepted the Do 17 30 miles off Skegness.

On 23 July, it was Blue Section of Spitfire-equipped No 603 Sqn (Flt Lt Frederick Rushmer, future ace Plt Off Ron Berry and Plt Off Noel Benson) that caused the demise of the Do 17. Scrambled at 1447 hrs, the pilots had spotted a lone aircraft dropping two bombs on a trawler 15 miles east of Peterhead. The No 603 Sqn Intelligence Report provides the following details on the subsequent action;

'Blue 1 attacked from astern and below, opening fire at 200 yards and closing to 50 yards with a four-second burst. Blue 2 and 3 had by this time climbed to cloud base and Blue 3 attacked on starboard quarter as enemy aircraft was entering cloud. Blue 2 then attacked on starboard beam

whilst enemy aircraft was in cloud, opening fire at 300 yards and closing to 150 yards, firing two bursts of six seconds. Enemy aircraft then came out on top of cloud and Blue 3 saw smoke coming from enemy aircraft and attacked, breaking away as his windscreen had become obscured by oil from enemy aircraft. Throughout these attacks return fire was experienced from two top guns and one bottom gun. Enemy aircraft then re-entered cloud with black smoke pouring from it and was next seen in the sea, a column of smoke rising about 300 ft. Blue 1 and 3 circled for five to ten minutes and saw amongst the other wreckage a large red object floating and on fire. There was no sign of any survivors, and the column of smoke was still the same size when they returned to base.'

Understandably, there were no survivors, although the Do 17 crew had managed to damage two of the Spitfires prior to their own demise.

Dornier combat losses for the first ten days of August were limited to a Do 17P of 4.(F)/14 flown by Oberleutnant Rolf Vöckel, which went missing over the Channel on the 3rd (one of three engaged in observing the movement of convoys) and a Do 17Z of 7./KG 3, flown by Oberleutnant Karl Ullrich, which was shot down by No 85 Sqn east of Lowestoft on the 6th. Things would change dramatically for the Luftwaffe and the Do 17 and its crews from 11 August, however.

Prior to this date, occasional attacks were still being carried out on Channel and North Sea shipping and coastal towns. Decoy flights aimed at drawing a response from RAF fighters, which would then be bounced by high-flying Bf 109s, were also undertaken, with Feldwebel Heinrich Albach of 9./KG 2 participating in two such missions to Margate on 7 and 10 August (the latter via Abbeville). Fighter Command ignored Albach's Do 17 on both occasions. On the 11th a series of nuisance flights were made over the Channel by aircraft from II./KG 2, with III./KG 2 following suit shortly thereafter. Three III. *Gruppe* aircraft returned damaged, with one crewman dead and several others wounded. I./KG 76 also carried out an attack on Sheerness that day without incident.

12 August would see a series of attacks by the Luftwaffe aimed specifically at Radio Direction Finding (radar) stations and airfields on the south coast, with Do 17s initially carrying out nuisance and decoy flights in southeastern England. On what would be the first day of the campaign against the British mainland, I./KG 2 targeted Lympne airfield, in Kent, at 0900 hrs. Crews reported dropping 90 110-lb bombs on hangars and buildings, although they also stated that the full effect of their attack could not be gauged due to mist.

Apparently, I./KG 2 and Bf 110-equipped *Erprobungsgruppe* (test wing) 210 then attacked Manston airfield, 30 miles northeast of Lympne. The first wave from the latter unit attacked at 1325 hrs, with the Do 17s following 20 minutes later. Crews involved stated that considerable damage had been inflicted on the target. Early that evening it was the turn of II./KG 2, led by *Kommodore* Oberst Johannes Fink, to bomb an airfield 'near Canterbury' (presumably Manston). Simultaneously, III./KG 2 attacked an airfield 'near Dover' (Hawkinge or Lympne), again with *Erprobungsgruppe* 210. Luftwaffe records state that Hawkinge was attacked in two waves, with 280 110-lb bombs being dropped first, followed by 16 1100-lb and eight 551-lb bombs. 'Canterbury airfield'

Do 17Z U5+KA of *Stab.*/KG 2 was one of five aircraft lost by the *Kampfgeschwader* during *Adlertag* on 13 August 1940, the bomber almost certainly being attacked by Flg Off James Walker of No 111 Sqn. With its engines inoperable, the Dornier was crash-landed by Oberleutnant Heinz Schlegel at Barham, in Kent. Schlegel, *Staffelkapitän* Oberleutnant Gerhard Oswald and Oberfeldwebeln Ernst Holz and Gustav Babbe were all captured, suffering either wounds from Walker's attack or injuries from the crash-landing

and another reported as being west of Manston received a total of five 1100-lb, four 551-lb and 439 110-lb bombs.

RAF records confirm that both Hawkinge and Lympne were hit, and that the attack on Manston was broken up. Amazingly, just two aircraft from II. *Gruppe* and one from III. *Gruppe* returned with damage and three wounded crew – these were the only Do 17 combat casualties that day.

The parts played by KG 3 and KG 76 on this date cannot be determined as few records for these units exist and no losses were suffered by either *Kampfgeschwader*. Of interest, one of the few recorded missions was undertaken by Leutnant Erwin Moll of 3./KG 76, who had only recently returned to duty after being wounded on 1 June. On the night of 5-6 August he took off at 2240 hrs to bomb fuel storage tanks at Port Victoria, on the Isle of Grain, but Moll failed to attack his primary target due to the dazzle effect of flares over the cloud. He dropped 20 110-lb bombs on nearby searchlights instead, before landing again at Beauvais at 2240 hrs. Moll would not fly again operationally for almost ten days.

13 August 1940 was meant to be *Adlertag* (Eagle Day), the first day of *Unternehmen Adlerangriff* ('Operation Eagle Attack'), which would notionally see the Luftwaffe wipe out the RAF. It should have seen multiple attacks made by hundreds of German bombers on key airfields in the southeast of England. However, due to bad weather, many of the attacks did not materialise or, as with KG 2, attempts were made to recall the bombers that had indeed taken off from Arras from 0600 hrs. Leading the KG 2 attack (which took place in two waves) on Eastchurch airfield, in Kent, was Oberst Johannes Fink and his *Stabstaffel*, with Oberleutnant Heinz

A veteran of combat in the trenches in World War I, Johannes Fink learned to fly in the 1920s and served with the *Reichswehrministerium* prior to transferring to the Luftwaffe in 1933. He was promoted to Oberst in June 1938 and was made *Kommodore* of KG 252 (which was re-designated KG 2 in May 1939) five months later. Fink successfully led the *Kampfgeschwader* in combat over Poland and France (for which he was awarded the *Ritterkreuz*, thus becoming the first Do 17 *Kampfflieger* to receive this decoration) and then during the Battle of Britain. He was replaced by Oberst Herbert Rieckhoff, formerly *Kommodore* of KG 30, following promotion to Generalmajor in October 1940. Fink survived the war with the rank of General der Flieger

Schlegel to his left and Oberleutnant Hans Langer to his right. I. *Gruppe* had heard the recall message and turned back, but Fink and the remaining aircraft had not due to them all being on a different radio wavelength. They flew, without any fighter escort, as Heinz Schlegel recalled;

'So KG 2 [less I. *Gruppe*] flew towards the Thames Estuary longing to see a *Zerstörer* escort. After reaching the Channel, the formation flew into a thick layer of cloud. A single *Zerstörer*, which presumably was there to draw out attention to the fact that the mission had been cancelled, circled us and disappeared again. It was obviously mistaken for our escort. When, in our estimation, we had reached the target, the clouds became thinner but the target could still not be seen so the formation flew in a wide turn towards London, where we turned around again. Now the formation was on an easterly course.

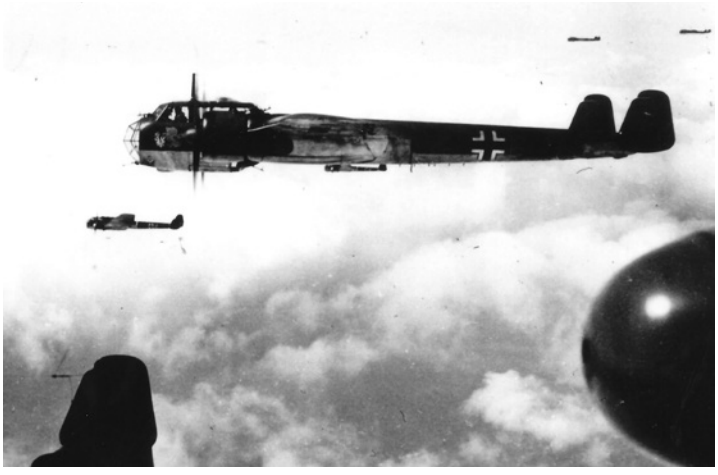
'The airfield was then spotted through a hole in the cloud, which was at a height of 800 m [2600 ft] – we were at 1500 m [4920 ft]. After flying another 180-degree turn, we attacked, having first descended through the hole before dropping our bombs quite accurately. But then the British fighters came from the east from the direction of the sea, where the rising sun prevented us from seeing them. It came as a complete surprise when their salvoes hit us. Neither the Bordfunker not the Bordmechaniker [flight mechanic] had a chance to shoot. Both were wounded, specifically in their forearms. The aircraft was hit in the fuselage and in the engines. I succeeded in pulling the aeroplane up into the thin layer of cloud, but soon the port and then the starboard engines seized.'

It is believed that the aircraft had been attacked by Canadian pilot, and future ace, Flg Off James Walker of No 111 Sqn.

'I realised that we could not fly back over the Channel again', Schlegel explained, 'and I did not know if the wounded crew members could operate their parachutes, so the only thing to do was to make a force landing. An open meadow appeared, or it seemed to be open, so was the obvious place. But everywhere in southern Britain, the inhabitants had done things to prevent these meadows from being used by aircraft. Ditches had been dug, earth piled up in ramparts and poles had been rammed into the ground so this friendly meadow turned out to be quite bumpy. The aircraft landed heavily and came to a standstill at a big tree. After we got out and had a look around, some unarmed soldiers appeared. They asked for our pistols – there was no way we could have conquered England with those pistols anyway!'

KG 2 claimed to have dropped 240 110-lb bombs in the first wave of the attack, followed by six 551-lb and 480 110-lb bombs in the second wave. Its crews claimed hits on six hangars, numerous buildings, a flak position, a fuel tank and ten Spitfires. In reality, a number of hangars had indeed been struck, destroying five Blenheim IVs of Coastal Command's No 53 Sqn and damaging a single Spitfire of No 266 Sqn. RAF fighters in turn claimed to have shot down 16 Do 17s, probably shot down another four and damaged eight. In reality, in addition to Oberleutnant Heinz Schlegel's Do 17, four more from III. *Gruppe* were shot down and another seven returned to base with varying degrees of damage (one of which was flown by Oberleutnant Hans Langer). Eleven aircrew were killed, seven wounded and nine captured.

Dornier losses on *Adlertag* were limited to KG 2, and it is assumed that KG 3 and KG 76 did not participate in the day's abortive attacks. Two days later, however, all three Do 17 bomber *Geschwader* were very much in the thick of the action.



Do 17Zs from 2./KG 76 marked with the impressive 'bombed lion' insignia fly over a thick cloud bank as they head for a target in southern England in the summer of 1940. It is believed that this striking and elaborate badge was discontinued when I./KG 76 switched to the Ju 88A in early 1941

The first Dornier lost on 15 August was from 3.(F)/31 and commanded by Oberleutnant Hans Horn. Carrying out a reconnaissance sortie over southwest England, it was intercepted south of Portland by six Spitfires of No 602 Sqn led by future ace Flt Lt Robert Boyd and crashed off the Isle of Wight at 0740 hrs – exactly an hour after it had taken off. There were no survivors.

Mid-afternoon, all three *Gruppen* of KG 2 took off to attack airfields near to the Thames Estuary, and it appears that I. and II./KG 3 were also involved. Rochester airport was reportedly attacked in two waves during this period, after which all of KG 2's Do 17s returned to their French airfields unscathed. KG 3 was not so lucky, suffering a number of casualties. A Do 17Z-3 of *Stab* I./KG 3 force-landed at Wissant with combat damage, *Gruppenkommandeur* Oberst Karl *Freiherr* von Wechmar and Oberleutnant Otto Köhnke having been wounded. The latter, who would be awarded the *Ritterkreuz* in 1942, was so seriously hurt that he did not fly again until June 1941. Von Wechmar's wounds were clearly less serious as he took command of KG 26 later in the summer, only to be killed in an accident on 19 November 1940. An aircraft from 2./KG 3 also returned with slight damage, although its pilot, Feldwebel Erich Schmidt, had been mortally wounded. The majority of KG 2's losses came from 6. *Staffel*, which had two bombers shot down and four damaged. Crew casualties totalled two killed, six captured and four wounded.

The final attack of the day was by I. and III./KG 76, the *Kampfgeschwader* undertaking its first major operation of the Battle of Britain. The Do 17 crews were tasked with attacking Redhill and Biggin Hill airfields, and they claimed to have dropped 579 110-lb bombs on the former and 24 551-lb and 276 110-lb bombs and 32 incendiary canisters on the latter. Both units actually attacked West Malling, rather than Biggin Hill. The Dornier crews, led by the *Kommodore,* Generalmajor Stephan Fröhlich, reported great confusion above the target and that their escort was ineffective, which allowed RAF fighters to fly through the formation. Spitfire-equipped No 54 Sqn claimed to have damaged four Do 17s, but just the aircraft commanded by the *Kommodore* was hit and its pilot, Oberleutnant Hans Lommatsch, mortally wounded.

16 August would follow a similar pattern for all three Do 17 bomber *Geschwader*. They initially headed for England just before midday, with the logbook of Leutnant Erwin Moll of 3./KG 76 stating that his unit took off from Beauvais at 1143 hrs German time, only for the attack to be

cancelled. The bombers returned after a flight lasting one-and-three-quarter hours. However, the Do 17 flown by Oberfeldwebel Edmund Riebl of *Stab* III./KG 76 was lost during a high-level attack by 18+ Dorniers on an airfield near Maidstone (West Malling), the bomber being struck in a head-on pass by the No 111 Sqn Hurricane of ace Flt Lt Henry Ferris. All four German crew and the British pilot were killed.

At the same time, 24 aircraft from KG 3 were heading up the Thames Estuary for Tilbury Docks, although the bombers released their ordnance early and caused death and destruction in the Kentish town of Northfleet instead.

Attacks on 17 August were hampered by bad weather, with Oberleutnant Joachim Genzow of 4./KG 2 noting that he took off from Saint-Léger at 1622 hrs and was recalled 25 minutes later when the bombers received word that their target was obscured by cloud. However, on the 18th, which would become known post-war as the 'Hardest Day' of the Battle of Britain, Do 17s of KG 76 carried out what was intended to be a spectacular attack on Kenley airfield just after noon. Ju 88s from II./KG 76 would be tasked with striking the fighter station first, followed by a low-level attack by nine Do 17s from 9./KG 76. Finally, the remaining Dorniers of I. and III./KG 76 would attack the airfield in a wave.

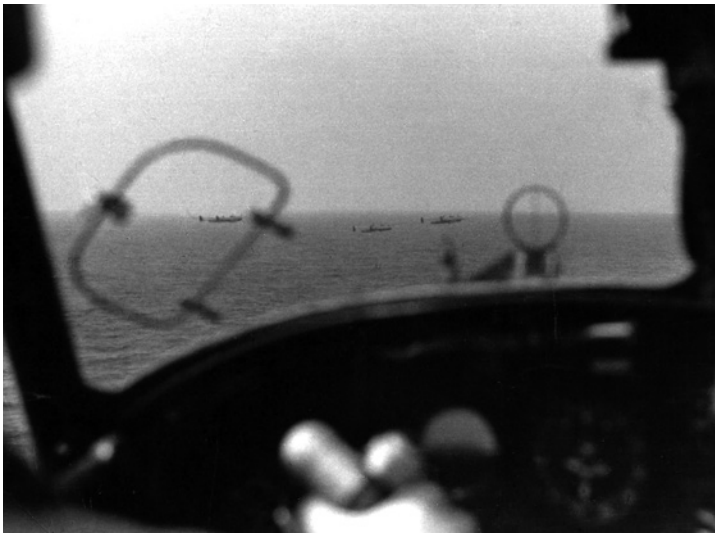
Sonderführer Willi Perchemeier, one of eight war reporters or cameramen flying with KG 76 that day, related what happened to him and Feldwebel Karl Krebs' crew in a Ju 88 from 5./KG 76;

'The target was Kenley aerodrome. It was intended our Ju 88 *Gruppe* would lure away British fighters and flak attention from another Do 17 *Staffel* that would attack at low-level. In addition, we would then dive-bomb the target. We flew at 4000 m [13,120 ft], and a short time after the flak stopped, the fighters appeared. One of them hit our port engine, which immediately burst into flames.'

However, due to a delay in forming up over France, 9./KG 76, led by *Staffelkapitän* Hauptmann Joachim Roth, attacked five minutes *before* II./KG 76 arrived overhead. British defences were also ready, and cloud-cover then hampered the higher-level attackers. 9. *Staffel* came in over the southern boundary of the airfield in line abreast formation as low as possible, and with the Hurricane of ace Flt Lt Stanley Connors of No 111 Sqn amongst them. He would soon crash to his death, his fighter having been set alight either by a shell from one of Kenley's anti-aircraft gun batteries or return fire from a Do 17.

Ground defences, which included parachute and cable launchers that fired steel cables vertically into the air that were then held aloft by a parachute, were quickly in action. Nevertheless, three hangars and

On 18 August 1940, nine Do 17Zs from low-level attack specialists *Staffel* 9./KG 76 targeted RAF Kenley, in Surrey. No fewer than eight war reporters or photographers flew on board the aircraft involved in the daring raid, and this shot was taken through the pilot's windscreen by one of the latter as the three *Ketten* of three Dorniers approached Beachy Head near Eastbourne, on the Sussex coast



The lead *Kette* of three Do 17Zs from 9./KG 76, with the lowest aircraft flown by Oberleutnant Rudolf Lamberty and commanded by *Staffelkapitän* Hauptmann Joachim Roth, skim over the waves at 50 ft as they track westward along the coast off Beachy Head prior to heading inland

numerous other buildings were destroyed, the telephone system was cut and a Hurricane (from No 615 Sqn) and a Blenheim written off. Nine airmen, mainly from Nos 64 and 615 Sqns, were killed and seven wounded. These successes came at some cost to KG 76. In addition to two Ju 88s from II. *Gruppe* that were lost (including the aircraft in which Sonderführer Willi Perchemeier was flying), I. *Gruppe* had a Do 17 shot down over Surrey and two more damaged – three were killed and two captured in the aircraft that was destroyed and three wounded in the bombers that made it back to France.

It was III. *Gruppe* and, in particular, the daring low-level raiders of 9. *Staffel* that bore the brunt of the losses during the Kenley attack. Indeed, aside from the aircraft of Leutnant Ernst Leder of 8. *Staffel*, which crashed in the Channel (three crew were killed and two rescued), all the Dorniers that failed to return to the unit's airfield at Cormeilles-en-Vexin were from 9./KG 76. Two Do 17s, including the bomber commanded by the *Staffelkapitän*, Hauptmann Roth, came down on British soil, whilst two more ditched in the Channel. The remaining five returned home with varying degrees of damage.

In terms of the human cost, 9. *Staffel* suffered seven killed, eight wounded and four captured. This was a larger than normal tally for the number of aircraft downed due to the additional war reporters, photographers and senior personnel that participated in the unique mission. The latter, namely Oberst Dr Otto Sommer (who was killed flying the aircraft commanded by Oberleutnant Hans-Siegfried Ahrends) and Hauptmann Gustav Peters (who was captured with the rest of Roth's crew, all of whom were injured in the crash-landing), were seeking operational experience of low-altitude precision attacks.

There was one final casualty of the Kenley raid. Oberleutnant Hermann Magin, again from 9./KG 76, was mortally wounded when a single bullet fired from the ground hit him in the chest as the bombers attacked the airfield. His Beobachter, Oberfeldwebel Wilhelm-Friedrich Illg, immediately leant over him, grabbed the control column and managed to get the bomber to climb in the hope that the Do 17 could then be levelled out so that the crew could take to their parachutes. Illg soon found that he could not turn the aircraft, as Magin's legs were jammed against the rudder pedals. They were now headed for central London. Feldwebel Willi Henke

Unteroffizier Günther Unger's Do 17Z from 9./KG 76 was photographed shortly after the aircraft had crossed the coastline at Seaford, with the Channel now behind the bomber. It would be damaged by fighters and Unger forced to ditch nine miles off the French coast on the return flight, resulting in the death of Unteroffizier Karl Moritz. Unger was later shot down by flak during a raid on Birkenhead docks on the night of 12 March 1941, he and his crew abandoning their Ju 88A over the target area and being captured

and Sonderführer Georg Hinze eventually lifted Magin's body out of the pilot's seat, allowing Illg to take his place behind the controls and turn the Do 17 southward.

The crew, which apparently included Unteroffizier Hans Strahlendorf, then took stock. It was clear that Magin had been very seriously wounded, the bullet having smashed his left arm before entering the left side of his chest – his flying suit was soaked with blood. They crossed the Channel coast without incident and planned on making make a wheels down landing at St Omer. Although it took four attempts, Illg succeeded in landing at Norrent-Fontes airfield. Magin never regained consciousness and died before he could get to hospital. For his actions that day, Illg, who had never flown a Do 17 before, was recommended for the *Ritterkreuz* and promotion to Leutnant.

I. and II./KG 2 would mount another large-scale raid in the late afternoon of 18 August against targets along the Thames Estuary to the east of London. Although as many as 85 Do 17s participated in this raid, thanks to an effective fighter escort by Bf 109Es and Bf 110s, just one aircraft from 6. *Staffel* reported being attacked near Whitstable, with *Staffelkapitän* Hauptmann Ulrich Linnemann being wounded.

Understandably, given the exertions and losses of the 18th, the Dornier-equipped units saw little action over the next 48 hours, which were blighted by poor weather. KG 2's war diary revealed that the *Kampfgeschwader* carried out a series of single-aircraft armed coastal reconnaissance missions and airfield attacks. During one of these in the early evening of 19 August Leutnant Josef Mumb and his crew from 7./KG 2 were shot down off Aldeburgh, on the Suffolk coast, by Spitfires of No 19 Sqn after the bomber had attacked RAF Honington – all four crewmen were captured.

The following morning, Leutnant Peter Krieger's aircraft (also from 7./KG 2) was damaged off Aldeburgh, the Do 17Z returning to base with a wounded Bordfunker. That evening, the 9./KG 2 aircraft flown by Oberfeldwebel Franz Weiler was attacked off nearby Southwold, the bomber making it home with two wounded crew on board. III./KG 3 had also made an appearance over the Channel on 20 August when just under 30 aircraft headed for Eastchurch airfield, on the Isle of Sheppey, during the afternoon. Poor weather precluded them from bombing their target, however, and the 9./KG 3 aircraft flown by Feldwebel Emil Rüdinger fell to Hurricanes of No 615 Sqn. Although Rüdinger was killed, the three remaining crew survived to become PoWs.

While the traditional Do 17 bomber units were waging war in the southeast, KüFlGr 606, now commanded by Major Joachim Hahn, had moved from Kiel-Holtenau to Brest, on the Brittany coast, where it would carry out armed maritime reconnaissance and precision night attacks

against land targets. For example, as the sun was setting on 20 August, Hahn led seven aircraft from 1./KüFlGr 606 against airfields in Cornwall, with all the Do 17s landing back safely at Brest by 0230 hrs. Five of the bombers had naval Beobachter as part of the crew due to the maritime nature of the unit. Until now, KüFlGr 606 had only lost one aircraft in combat in the Battle of Britain. This would soon change.

It is interesting to note that from this stage of the campaign onward, night attacks began to feature more frequently in the logbooks of Do 17 crews. For example, on the night of 18-19 August, KG 2 flew its first night attack, against Harwich (I./KG 2) and Colchester (III./KG 2), with all aircraft landing safely – albeit the bomber of Feldwebel Heinrich Albach of 9./KG 2 landed at Reims and not Cambrai, with just 30 litres of fuel left in its tanks. Leutnant Erwin Moll of 3./KG 76 records attacking Brighton and an 'aero engine works' at Slough (presumably the Hawker plant at Langley) on the nights of 20-21 and 21-22 August, respectively. Although the *Kampfflieger* did not know it, the days of major daylight attacks on mainland Britain by Do 17s would effectively end in 26 days' time, but in the interim a further 66 examples would be totally destroyed whilst on operations.

21 August was yet another day of poor weather over eastern England, which allowed KG 2 and KG 3 to carry out a series of *Störangriffe* (harassing attacks), but at some cost to both units. Six Do 17s would be lost during the course of the day, resulting in ten aircrew being killed and 14 taken prisoner. The first aircraft to be downed was flown by Leutnant Heinz Ermecke of 2./KG 2, who had survived crash-landing following combat on 10 July. This time, however, he was not so lucky, his bomber being intercepted by three Hurricanes of No 242 Sqn. It eventually crashed at Harleston, in Suffolk, just after midday, killing Ermecke. The remaining members of his crew were captured. Ten minutes later, Spitfires of No 611 Sqn shot down two Do 17s from 4./KG 3 off the Lincolnshire coast, resulting in the deaths of Feldwebel Max Zimmermann and Oberfeldwebel Wilhelm Stolle and their respective crews.

The next two losses occurred in the early afternoon, and were suffered by KG 3. Three Do 17s from 6. *Staffel* had headed to eastern England on an operational training mission for two new crews, *Staffelkapitän* Oberleutnant Herbert Schwartz hoping that the poor weather would prevent the bombers from being attacked by RAF fighters. However, as the *Kette* of Do 17s crossed the Lincolnshire coast, the cloud thinned sufficiently enough to allow them to be intercepted by three Spitfires of No 611 Sqn. One of the pilots, Sgt Andrew Darling, noted that all three German aircraft were in a tight formation, and that they used the broken cloud to try and hide. He also noted that one of the aircraft had been hit in the starboard engine, which was now pouring black smoke;

'I followed enemy aircraft into cloud and knowing I was close behind (because of the slipstream), gave another burst. Still in cloud, thick black smoke covered my windscreen, and on coming out I saw enemy aircraft hit the ground and burst into flames. As enemy aircraft hit, I observed six or seven enemy descending by parachute.'

Oberleutnant Schwartz explained what had happened;

'The Spitfires directly behind us had the good luck to silence my port engine. This meant abandoning the mission and returning home. As both

the radio and intercom were out of action, I could only hope that the other crews would understand my change of course for Antwerp, and my disappearing into cloud again. Unfortunately, Unteroffizier Georg Pollmann lost me in this manoeuvre and tried to find me again in the clouds, which in fact he did, tearing off about two metres [6.5 ft] of the port wing and cutting deep into my fuselage, beheading my Bordfunker in the process.

'My aeroplane went into a spin and we were fast spiralling down. None of the usual manoeuvres could get the aeroplane out of the spin and I decided to try one last resort – putting the bomber onto its back. I didn't have to worry because the aeroplane then broke up. I later gathered that the tail broke off, letting the fuselage flip upside down. My Beobachter broke through the cockpit roof and I must have got out the same way after my seatbelt had broken.'

Just Schwartz and his Beobachter survived from his aircraft, whilst all of the Pollmann crew successfully bailed out.

There would be one final Do 17 lost early that evening when Leutnant Konrad Ksienzyk of 8./KG 2 was shot down by a Hurricane of No 56 Sqn while attempting to attack RAF Wyton, in Cambridgeshire – all four crew bailed out and were captured.

The next four days would be quieter in respect to losses, despite substantial raids involving 20+ Do 17s being flown on 22 and 24 August against targets in eastern Kent – effective fighter escort ensured the safety of the bomber crews. Just one *Stab*./KG 2 was shot down by flak on 23 August and all four crew captured, a Do 17Z from 3./KG 76 fell to No 32 Sqn over the Channel on the evening of the 25th during an attack on Hawkinge (two crew were wounded) and a bomber from 1./KüFlGr 606 failed to return from an armed reconnaissance of the sea lanes west of Britain.

The Hawkinge raid (the second such attack by Do 17s on the Kent airfield in two days), involving just 12 Dorniers, had been mounted as a decoy mission to draw up British fighters, which would then be pounced upon by close to 90 Bf 109Es from JG 26 and I. and III./JG 54. The *Jagdflieger* duly claimed 11 fighters that evening, although only two Hurricanes and three Spitfires had been lost, with a fourth Spitfire damaged.

Following an improvement in the weather, 26 August would see another series of major attacks flown against airfields in an attempt to nullify as many RAF fighters as possible. Just before midday, a small number of Do 17s from III./KG 3 took off on a diversionary attack against Manston. This small formation of bombers again had a massive escort, with at least the whole of Bf 109E-equipped JG 3 to look after them. Nevertheless, in the vicious air battles that ensued, 7./KG 3 suffered losses.

Leutnant Karl Eggers ditched his aircraft into the sea off Foreness Point, on the north Kent coast, and was rescued, although he died in captivity two days later. His Bordfunker and gunner had both drowned, leaving his Beobachter as the crew's only survivor. Leutnant Heinz Sachse also ditched in the Channel, but on the return flight, and although he was killed, the three remaining crew survived the ordeal with wounds. A third aircraft force-landed at Merville, low on fuel and with three wounded crew.

The final bomber lost by 7. *Staffel* was Do 17Z-2 Wk-Nr 1160 5K+AR, which had become separated from the main formation following an attack by RAF fighters. Unable to make it back to France, the pilot crashed the

Dornier onto the Goodwin Sands. Feldwebel Willi Effmert and Unteroffizier Hermann Ritzel were the only survivors, with the body of Unteroffizier Helmut Reinhardt later washing ashore in Holland and Gefreiter Heinz Huhn being found on an English beach. This aircraft is believed to be the one recovered by the RAF Museum on 10 June 2013.

Mid-afternoon on the 26th, I./KG 2 took off to attack RAF Hornchurch and III./KG 2 headed for nearby RAF Debden – Feldwebel Heinrich Albach of 9./KG 2 wrote that he left Cambrai at 1456 hrs to attack the latter fighter station. Instead of his usual Beobachter, Leutnant Helmut Stelzer, Albach was flying with Hauptmann Walter Bradel, who would take command of 9. *Staffel* in just over two weeks' time (he would subsequently be awarded the *Ritterkreuz* and eventually become *Kommodore* of KG 2). Albach also wrote that the formation was heavily attacked, with his aircraft being harried by four Spitfires for 30 minutes. I. *Gruppe* duly lost two aircraft – the Do 17 commanded by Hauptmann Hans Fösse of 2. *Staffel* and a second 2./KG 2 aircraft that included *Gruppenkommandeur* Major Martin Gutzmann, flying his first mission since recovering from wounds received on 10 May, within its crew. Both aircraft force-landed, with seven crew captured and one killed. A further six crew, including the *Staffelkapitän* of 3./KG 2, Oberleutnant Gottfried Buchholz, were wounded.

Following damage received by Spitfires during an attack on Hornchurch airfield on 26 August 1940, Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2425 U5+GK of 2./KG 2 belly landed two miles southwest of Eastchurch, in Kent. Although Unteroffizier Ambrosius Schmölzer, *Gruppenkommandeur* Major Martin Gutzmann and Unteroffizier Helmut Buhr survived and were captured, Oberleutnant Siegfried Hertel had been killed by enemy fire. Gutzmann, having been wounded in action on 10 May 1940, had only recently returned to operational flying. The narrowness of the Do 17Z's cockpit is clearly visible from this angle, as are the two extra MG 15s fitted to the side windows of many aircraft following combat in France

III. *Gruppe*'s 7./KG 2 suffered three aircraft lost over England during the Debden raid, with three crew killed and nine captured. A fourth aircraft from 9./KG 2 returned to France with a wounded Bordfunker. All of these Do 17s had fallen victim to Hurricanes of No 1 Sqn RCAF.

In the wake of such serious attrition, it is not surprising that for the remaining five days of August 1940, KG 2 concentrated on night attacks – Hull, Harwich, Colchester, Derby and Thameshaven all appeared on the unit's target list. Some historians have also suggested that this mission shift could be linked with the first attack on Berlin by Bomber Command in the early hours of 26 August.

The night sky generally provided Do 17 crews with sufficient protection from RAF fighters, virtually all of which then lacked air intercept radar. Nevertheless, two aircraft from II./KG 2 and one from III. *Gruppe* claimed to have been damaged by nightfighters, resulting in two Do 17s being abandoned over France and Belgium and the third crashing upon its return to base. The only possible RAF claimant was Sgt Sidney Baxter of Spitfire-equipped No 222 Sqn, who attacked an unidentified aircraft over Norfolk on the night of 27-28 August 1940 but was blinded by his own tracer so did not see the results of his two bursts.

KüFlGr 606's records show that it too was now focusing on night missions, with few, if any, daylight maritime operations being flown.

2./KG 76 marked its aircraft with this impressive insignia during the *Staffel*'s time at Beauvais, 45 miles north of Paris. Here, *Staffelkapitän* Oberleutnant Rudolf Hallensleben is seen standing below the engine nacelle, conversing with one of the bomber's groundcrew. A future recipient of the *Ritterkreuz* and *Kommodore* of KG 51, Hallensleben was killed in action on 19 April 1945 when the staff car in which he was travelling was strafed while crossing an autobahn bridge near Leipheim

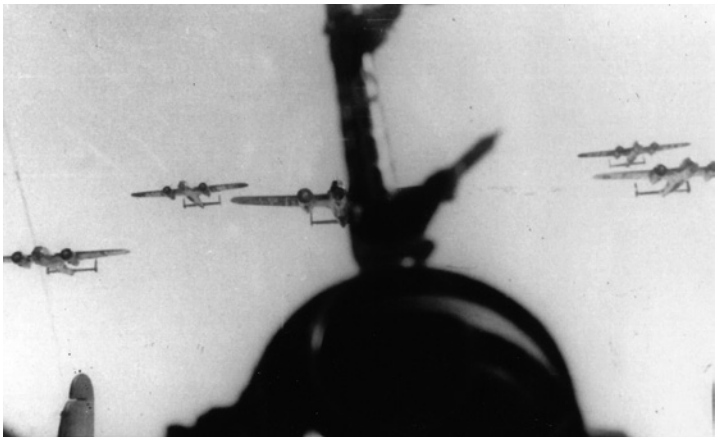
Between the nights of 26 and 31 August, KüFlGr 606 launched a total of 120 Do 17s (together with aircraft from other units) against such targets as St Eval and Bristol (26th), Avonmouth (28th), Liverpool/Birkenhead (29th and 31st) and Falmouth (31st).

The first Dornier lost on a dedicated reconnaissance mission in 12 days occurred on 27 August when No 238 Sqn Hurricanes shot down the Do 17P of 3.(F)/31 commanded by Leutnant Walter Haffa over Devon at 1020 hrs. Less than two hours later, Hurricanes from Nos 56 and 501 Sqns downed another Do 17P, this time from 3.(F)/10 off Cap Gris Nez. There would be just one more loss – a Do 17P of 3.(F)/22, flown by Leutnant-zur-See Gert von Seebeck over the North Sea on 30 August – until 5 December 1940. Indeed, the latter aircraft, from 3.(F)/31, was the last Do 17P downed that year. By then, many photo-reconnaissance units had swapped their elderly Do 17Ps for Ju 88As.

It would appear that Do 17s still played a minor part in day attacks for all but one of the remaining days of August 1940. I and II./KG 3 attacked Rochford during the afternoon of the 28th, losing the 6. *Staffel* aircraft flown by Leutnant Peter Krug to a Spitfire of No 54 Sqn (all four crew were captured), whilst a 4. *Staffel* machine crashed back in France after combat. I. *Gruppe* lost two aircraft in accidents whilst on operations that same day, resulting in the deaths of six crew, with two more wounded. On 29 August II./KG 2 had a bomber intercepted by a nightfighter over the Channel, the Do 17Z crashing near Senlis-Persan – only one of the four crew survived. 6./KG 3 lost a bomber on this date too after it hit a radio mast near Ghent, in Belgium, and crashed, killing all three crewmen. On 30 August, Leutnant Erwin Moll of 3./KG 76 reported attacking Biggin

Hill around noon and then Detling later that afternoon, although no Do 17s were lost or damaged from any unit that day.

The final day of the month was blessed with good weather, and II./KG 2 took full advantage of this by targeting Duxford airfield that morning. III. *Gruppe*, meanwhile, bombed Debden again, its crews reporting good hits on the airfield. KG 2's casualties were light, with one wounded in 5. *Staffel* and two wounded in III. *Gruppe*. One of the latter was the *Gruppenkommandeur*, Major Adolf Fuchs, whose wounds forced him to hand command of III./KG 2 over to Major Klaus Uebe. Around midday, it was the turn of I and II./KG 3 to target Hornchurch. The *Geschwader* was badly mauled by defending fighters, having four aircraft shot down and five damaged. Three aircrew were killed, 11 wounded and 11 captured.



The view from the Bordfunker's seat, manning the dorsal gun in a Do 17Z. Tight formation keeping was seen as the best method of defence for otherwise vulnerable bombers when intercepted by enemy fighters, each Do 17Z being armed with as many as eight machine guns by the height of the Battle of Britain

The last Do 17 attack of the day again saw Hornchurch bombed, this time by KG 76. Leutnant Erwin Moll of 3./KG 76 records taking off from Beauvais at 1730 hrs and landing again at 2000 hrs. The attack was carried out by 14 aircraft from I. *Gruppe* and just four from III. *Gruppe*. One of the Do 17s from 2. *Staffel* was flown by Leutnant Josef Kleppmeier, and his veteran Bordfunker, Unteroffizier Albert Bloss, provided the following account;

'In Poland, I flew 18 missions. From 10 May 1940, we flew 38 missions in France. During my tenth mission against Great Britain, on 31 August 1940, I was shot down.

'Over Hornchurch, our Do 17 was hit by flak in the starboard engine, which stopped, and so we were forced to leave the bomber formation. Oberfeldwebel Lang was so badly wounded in the left leg that it was subsequently amputated in hospital. Later on, we were attacked by five Spitfires. One of them approached our aircraft from the rear in the so-called "dead angle" of my machine gun. Moments later I was badly wounded in the crown of my head, which gave me cerebral damage and total paralysis, except in the left arm. The pilot and Beobachter were not wounded.

'After our crash-landing, we were captured by British soldiers and taken to a local hospital. On arriving there, I lost consciousness for a week.'

Although Kleppmeier's Do 17 was the only aircraft to be lost by KG 76 that day, Oberleutnant Rolf Hallensleben – 3./KG 76's *Staffelkapitän* – landed at Beauvais at 1959 hrs on one engine, the other having been knocked out by gunfire over England.

August 1940 had been a brutal month for the Do 17 and its crews, and there appeared to be little in the way of respite for the *Kampfflieger* with the coming of September. However, the direction of the campaign would suddenly change mid-month, giving the now ageing Dornier bomber a brief stay of execution.

September started badly for KG 76, two aircraft being damaged and returning to France with wounded crew following attacks on Kenley and Biggin Hill (I. *Gruppe*) and Gravesend (III. *Gruppe*) on the 1st. The only total loss came from 9. *Staffel* and resulted in Oberfeldwebel Wilhelm Illg, who had flown his Do 17 back on 18 August with a mortally wounded pilot, parachuting into captivity. His *Ritterkreuz* and promotion to Leutnant came whilst he was a PoW.

2 September saw III./KG 3 suffering two aircraft destroyed on returning to the Continent following an attack on Eastchurch, whilst Oberleutnant Ulrich Rohr of 9. *Staffel* was forced to crash-land on Rochford airfield – although he and two crew were captured, his Bordmechaniker had been killed when the bomber was shot up by Hurricanes from No 249 Sqn. Aircraft from I./KG 76 were recorded as having attacked Hornchurch that same day. The following morning II./KG 2 targeted North Weald, losing the aircraft flown by Leutnant Heinz-Günther Schild of 5./KG 2. The crossfire from the remaining aircraft accounted for the Hurricane that was believed to be responsible for the bomber's demise, Flg Off David Hanson of No 17 Sqn perishing when he bailed out too low. An attack that afternoon by III./KG 2 was recalled due to poor weather.

It appears that the Do 17 *Geschwader* were taking it in turns to attack key targets during the battle for the airfields, as on 4 September Leutnant Erwin Moll of 3./KG 76 reported attacking Rochford (bombed by III./KG 3 48 hours earlier), taking off at 0900 hrs and landing just over two hours later. That night he carried out an attack on Chatham Dockyard, whilst Feldwebel Heinrich Albach of 9./KG 2 reported bombing Norwich, in Norfolk.

5 September brought an increase in the mission tempo, with II./KG 2 targeting Biggin Hill in the late morning and, that evening, providing aircraft to accompany Do 17s from KG 3 and I./KG 76 in attacks on an oil tank farm at Thameshaven and the London Docks. Despite the intense action, the only casualties suffered by the Dornier units were two aircraft from 6./KG 2 that force-landed in France after receiving battle damage during the attack on Biggin Hill. Three crew were wounded. Little action was recorded on the 6th from a Do 17 perspective, and that night only I./KG 76 participated in a follow-up attack on Thameshaven.

On 7 September the Luftwaffe dramatically altered its tactics, with airfields now becoming secondary targets. The *Kampfgeschwader* would focus their attention on London and, later, other major cities. In a massive daylight effort to mark the start of this new offensive, all three Do 17 *Geschwader* were in action that day. II. and III./KG 2 reported launching 52 crews in the afternoon in what they described as a *Grossangriff* (major attack) against Victoria Docks, with two aircraft returning with wounded crews and the Do 17 of Unteroffizier Paul Christoph of 4./KG 2 crashing near Saint-Omer at the end of the mission, killing all on board.

KG 3 had six aircraft from II. and III. *Gruppe* damaged over London and returning with ten wounded crew, while the Do 17 of *Staffelkapitän* Hauptmann Friedrich Otting from *Stab.*/KG 3 crashed in the Channel during the return leg of the mission. Once again, there were no survivors.

Leutnant Erwin Moll of 3./KG 76 recorded that he took off at 1710 hrs on a 'Vengeance attack on London' and landed without incident. The

only Do 17 to crash on British soil that day was in fact from *Stab*./KG 76, Leutnant Gottfried Schneider and his crew being tasked with obtaining photographs of the damage caused by earlier attacks on the 7th. An official RAF report states that the Spitfire of Australian ace Flt Lt Pat Hughes from No 234 Sqn was damaged by pieces of the Do 17 he was attacking as the bomber broke up. However, it has also been stated that Hughes deliberately rammed the Dornier, which had been previously crippled by No 602 Sqn. Hughes' Spitfire crashed at Bessels Green, in Kent, and the Do 17 in the neighbouring parish of Sundridge at 1800 hrs. When the remains of the Dornier were recovered in the 1970s, pieces of a British aircraft were found with them. Three of the German crew were killed and Pat Hughes' parachute failed to open fully.

The following day saw what must have been the most spectacular loss of three Do 17s during the entire campaign. Aircraft from II./KG 2 took off for London just after 0900 hrs, only to be recalled due to bad weather. They departed Saint-Léger once again just over an hour later, this time being joined by aircraft from Cambrai-Süd-based III. *Gruppe* whose target was a pumping station. As they approached London, the aircraft flown by Oberleutnant Martin Ziems of 5./KG 2 took a direct hit by flak in the bomb-bay and exploded. The force of the explosion also destroyed the remaining two aircraft in the *Kette* flown by Leutnant Otto Landenberger and Oberleutnant Joachim Schneider. All three aircraft fell to earth near Maidstone, with all of the Ziems crew and three from Landenberger's aircraft being killed. Amazingly, Schneider and his crew survived, albeit with wounds. A fourth Do 17 from the same *Staffel*, flown by Feldwebel Georg Brendebach, was also damaged.

The only other Do 17 losses that day were the result of a mid-air collision near Ghent between two aircraft of 3./KG 3. *Staffelkapitän* Hauptmann Rolf Külkens and three crew perished.

Alois Lindmayr had joined the Austrian Heer (army) in 1925 and then trained as a pilot in the early 1930s, being assigned to *Fliegerregiment* 1 in 1934. Following the German annexation of Austria in March 1938, he became an officer in the Luftwaffe, being posted to KG 253. Lindmayr was promoted to *Staffelkapitän* of 7./KG 158 in November 1938, and in May 1939 his *Staffel* became 7./KG 76. He took part in the Polish campaign and the Battle of France, enjoying notable success in the latter whilst carrying out low-level attacks on airfields (one of which purportedly accounted for 28 French aircraft), railway lines and troop convoys. Promoted to Major and awarded a *Ritterkreuz*, he was briefly *Kommodore* of III./KG 76 in June 1940, then moved to I. *Gruppe*, before returning to III. *Gruppe* in late July. Lindmayr led the unit until December 1940, when it switched to the Ju 88. He survived the war, having attained the rank of Oberst

Two Do 17s head for the docks in London's East End during September 1940. Unlike the Kenley raiders seen earlier in this chapter, they are flying at an altitude (between 15,000-20,000 ft) more typical for bombers when approaching their target. As daylight attacks in greater numbers intensified, it was necessary to paint aircraft with white bars on their wingtips (and occasionally on their rudders too) to facilitate rapid air-to-air *Gruppe* identification

With the return of bad weather, which caused a number of missions to be recalled, the only Do 17 loss over England for the next six days was the aircraft flown by Oberleutnant Walter Domenig of 9./KG 76 on 10 September. Undertaking an armed reconnaissance sortie, the bomber was intercepted by Spitfires of No 72 Sqn near Weybridge, in Surrey, damaged by flak over either Kenley or Gatwick and probably attacked again by Spitfires from No 92 Sqn. Domenig jettisoned his bombs and the aircraft crashed shortly afterwards at West Hoathly, in West Sussex. Investigation of the wreckage revealed at least 1000 bullet holes, many of which had been patched from previous combats.

This extended spell of poor weather had not stopped KüFlGr 606 from mounting probing missions along the south and west coast of Britain, however, and on 14 September three of its aircraft crash-landed back at their Cherbourg-West base as a result of battle damage sustained in combat with RAF fighters. Two Do 17s were destroyed and two damaged, resulting in the crew being killed and one wounded.

It was clear that the RAF was becoming increasingly potent, and this would be proven on 15 September, after which the Do 17 began to be employed in different ways. Little needs to be said here about the actions that were fought on this date, which would soon become known as Battle of Britain Day. From a Do 17 point of view, losses suffered by all three bomber units forced the Luftwaffe to stop using the aircraft for massed daylight raids. As previously noted, when compared to the Ju 88 and He 111, the Do 17 was under-armed, limited on range and carried too small a bomb load. From then on, the Dornier would be restricted principally to night raids, or flown by experienced crews using bad weather and/or low-level flying techniques to attack specific targets alone.

II. and III./KG 2 lost seven aircraft on the 15th (with many others returning damaged), resulting in 18 crew being killed, ten wounded and seven captured. II./KG 3 had six aircraft shot down, with a number returning damaged – 13 aircrew were killed (amongst them the most senior Do 17 officer to die that day, Hauptmann Ernst Püttmann

Do 17Z Wk-Nr 2555 F1+FS of 8./KG 76 was shot down attacking London at 1210 hrs on 15 September 1940 by Flg Off John Dundas and Plt Off Eugene Tobin of No 609 Sqn. Feldwebeln Rolf Heitsch, Hans Pfeiffer and Martin Sauter were captured and Stephan Schmid mortally wounded. Here, one of the wounded *Kampfflieger* is carried away to a nearby ambulance on a stretcher

Staffelkapitän of 5./KG 3), 11 captured and five wounded. Finally, I. and III./KG 76 encountered heavy fighter opposition en route to London, losing six aircraft between them. One of these Do 17s was the 1. *Staffel* bomber of Oberleutnant Robert Zehbe, famously photographed minus its tail (which had been severed by the No 504 Sqn Hurricane of Sgt Ray Holmes) and outer wing panels, diving headlong towards Victoria Station. Sixteen aircrew from KG 76 lost their lives, four more were wounded and ten captured.

Surviving German logbooks reveal an instant change in tactics in the wake of the sobering attrition of 15 September. For example, Oberleutnant Walter Bornschein of 4./KG 2 did not fly his next daylight mission until 4 October, having in the meantime completed seven night attacks, all against London. Feldwebel Georg Brendebach of 5./KG 2, who had flown a weather reconnaissance sortie during the morning of 15 September, did not fly another daylight mission for the remainder of 1940. He did, however, complete ten night attacks against London and one against Coventry. Feldwebel Heinrich Albach of 9./KG 2 flew 15 night attacks through to 19 November and two daylight *Störangriff* in bad weather. Again, all the night missions were against London, apart from the 19 November sortie when his crew became lost returning from an attack on Birmingham and bailed out near Lyon. Finally, Leutnant Erwin Moll of 3./KG 76 flew ten night missions before 29 October, when he and his *Gruppe* returned to Germany to convert to the Ju 88.

III./KG 76 would start its conversion to the Ju 88 at year-end, whilst I. and II./KG 3 would do the same in March 1941. Finally, Major Joachim Hahn's KüFlGr 606 managed to resist replacing all of its Do 17s with He 111s until late January 1941, when it too started a wholesale conversion to the Ju 88. The Do 17 was rapidly becoming a rare sight in British skies.

Wk-Nr. 2555 was expertly force-landed on a sloping field at Lullingstone Castle Farm in Kent by Feldwebel Rolf Heitsch. Having initially attracted a crowd of onlookers, the bomber was soon dismantled by the army and taken away for scrapping. 8./KG 76's insignia, consisting of three white bombers in silhouette against a red bomb and black shield, can just be seen on the nose of the Do 17Z

CHAPTER FIVE

BLITZ

The bulges on the nose of this Dornier are floatation devices for aircraft primarily used on maritime attack missions. Designated the Do 17Z-5, this variant was flown almost exclusively by KüFlGr 606, which undertook both maritime and night bombing raids from Lannion and Brest, in western France

The days following 15 September 1940 saw little action involving the Do 17s. An aircraft from 7./KG 2 crash-landed near Cambrai and was written off after suffering combat damage on the 19th, with a machine from 2./KG 3 also being damaged in action that same day. On the 20th, a Do 17P of 4.(F)/121 crash-landed at Caen after being damaged by fighters, whilst a few hours later, during the night of 20/21 September, a Do 17Z from 3./KüFlGr 606 was so badly holed by flak whilst targeting Liverpool that it was written off upon its return to base. Two more aircraft from KüFlGr 606 were destroyed the following night after being intercepted by fighters over the Channel whilst returning from yet another raid on Liverpool, a 1. *Staffel* aircraft crash-landing at Sizun and a 3. *Staffel* aircraft coming down at Landerneau, killing the crew.

KüFlGr 606 was now very much in the vanguard of lone aircraft *Störangriffe* missions, which were increasingly becoming the domain of most Do 17 units. For example, at 2030 hrs on 19 September, a lone Do 17 from KüFlGr 606 had attacked the Coastal Command airfield at St Eval, in north Cornwall, dropping ten SC 50 110-lb bombs and two BSK 36 incendiary containers. Five days later, Unteroffizier Hans Figge of 2./KG 76 carried out a *Störangriff* against London, using cloud for cover. He had force-landed near Poix on 15 September, and this time he was intercepted by ace Flg Off Ian Muirhead and Plt Off Witold Glowacki of Hurricane-equipped No 605 Sqn and force-landed near Boulogne.

Three more Do 17s were lost on operations (and two damaged) on the very last day of September, the aircraft from 8./KG 2 crashing at Bertincourt at the end of a mission to England – all four crew were killed. There were no survivors from the 8./KG 3 machine that crashed in the Channel either, although all survived the crash-landing of a 7./KG 3 Do 17Z near Boulogne. RAF fighter pilots were credited with having destroyed three Do 17s that day, as well as probably destroying three more and damaging a further 11. As had been the case throughout the Battle of Britain, their aircraft identification left a lot to be desired, as did the veracity of the victory claims.

With the arrival of October 1940 came poorer weather and a further reduction in attrition. For example, KG 2 reported the total loss of just seven Do 17s during the month, and of those, one was lost to flak, five in accidents and just one on daylight operations. The latter occurred on 2 October, with the aircraft being flown by Oberleutnant Hans Langer, *Staffelkapitän* of *Stab.*/KG 2. Here, he explains the circumstances behind the loss of this Do 17;

'After trying hard, I managed to get permission from my *Kommodore*, Oberst Johannes Fink, to attack targets with single aircraft in daylight. On 2 October there was six-tenths cloud over Britain. This weather, using the cloud banks as cover, suited single aircraft attacks, so we took off to attack the Handley Page aircraft factory near London.'

Unfortunately for Langer and his crew, just south of London, the cloud disappeared, and shortly after aborting the mission they were intercepted and shot down by five Hurricanes of No 17 Sqn. All four crewmen were captured.

Crews now posted to Do 17 units rarely flew anything but night operations from then on. Leutnant Karl von Manowarda joined 5./KG 2 at Saint-Léger towards the end of September, and he flew his first mission – a nocturnal attack on London – on the night of 15 October. Von Manowarda would be posted away on 23 February 1941, by which time he had flown four *Störangriffe* and 16 night raids.

Operating in skies that were not so well defended, KüFlGr 606 did enjoy some success with its *Störangriffe* to the west, however. Between 0605 and

Conducting its own bombing campaign separately to the mainstream *Kampfgeschwader* during the summer and autumn of 1940, KüFlGr 606 received very little coverage in the German wartime press during this period. Its Do 17Z-5s were rarely photographed either, with this shot showing toned down 7T+HH of 1. *Staffel* at Brest in October 1940

0612 hrs on 1 October, for example, four aircraft from the *Führungskette* and one from 2./KüFlGr 606, all led by Major Joachim Hahn, took off from Brest to attack the airfields at Pembroke-Carew. They duly dropped 40 110-lb bombs and 240 incendiaries on the airfield from a height of just 100 ft, 'with great effect', according to the crews involved.

Forty-eight hours later, again at dawn, Major Hahn led *Staffelkapitän* Hauptmann Werner Lassmann of 2. *Staffel* and Hauptmann Heinrich Golcher, *Staffelkapitän* of 3. *Staffel*, aloft from Lannion in an attack on St Eval. Hahn was a great exponent of low-level formation attacks, having found that the Do 17 was highly suitable for such missions. Indeed, he had started training his crews for low-level formation attacks on airfields during the early autumn of 1940. The three aircraft bombed their target at 0805 hrs, again from 100 ft, with good results, and the following day a similar attack was carried out against the airfield at Penrhos, in Gwynedd. This attack was also deemed to have been successful, with the bombers strafing a freighter on their way home.

Hahn was revered by his men for the boldness of his tactics in the Do 17, being described by one officer as 'a man of forceful personality. He insists on carrying out his own ideas even though these are not always approved by his superiors or his own personnel. He is nevertheless popular in the *Gruppe*, his courage and human qualities being much admired'. Due to his leadership, and the daring nature of such low-level attacks in daylight, Hahn was awarded the *Ritterkreuz* 'for meritorious operations against England' on 21 October 1940.

Although KüFlGr 606 persisted with its mixed day and night operations throughout the month, its crews were tasked with something a little different on 11 October. The attack that day by both 1. and 2./ KüFlGr 606 was described as a *Dämmerungsangriff* (twilight attack). The sorties planned for the 9th had been called off due to poor weather, thus allowing the *Küstenfliegergruppe* to assemble six Do 17s – three from both *Staffeln*, with five carrying six 100-lb bombs and 300 incendiaries each, and the sixth armed with ten 100-lb bombs and 60 incendiaries. Five of the Do 17s were heading for aircraft factories at Crewe and Liverpool Speke, whilst the Dornier with the heavier bombload was sent to attack Birkenhead.

No 611 Sqn was warned that three aircraft were near the Scilly Isles, being told that if the contacts remained on their present track they would be over Holyhead at 1830 hrs at 14,000 ft. Nine Spitfires were duly scrambled from RAF Ternhill, Shropshire, at 1820 hrs, and they soon spotted the bombers approaching from the southwest. The first to enter the fray was Yellow Section, which consisted of future aces Flg Offs Douglas 'Dirty' Watkins, Barrie Heath and Plt Off Tommy Williams. They were then followed by Red Section's Flt Lt Jack Leather (also a future ace) and Plt Offs Phil Pollard and Jim Sutton.

Who shot down whom is hard to ascertain with any certainty, as some of the No 611 Sqn claims were a little optimistic. Heath and Williams stated that their Do 17 came down in the sea 50 miles from Holyhead, while Jack Leather stated that his section had destroyed two aircraft, one crashing ten miles south of Caernarvon and the other near Capel Curig – the engines of the latter machine were seen to be on fire and two crew bailed out. This aircraft was the Do 17 flown by Oberfeldwebel Willi Hagen, which

Groundcrew work on the port Bramo Fafnir 323P engine of a partially toned down Do 17Z from II./KG 2 at Saint-Léger in the autumn of 1940. It has had its nose band obliterated, the paint used to do this being clearly visible. The underside of its forward fuselage has also been crudely blacked out, although the undersurfaces of the wings and engine nacelles do not appear to have been touched

did indeed start to burn after being shot up. Feldwebel Willi Staas and Unteroffizier Heinz Johannsen bailed out, and the latter must have hit the tail, for he was found dead near Caernarvon with an unopened parachute. Staas was captured uninjured.

It was believed that their Do 17 had crashed 'somewhere in the wilds of north Wales', and the remaining two crew members, Hagen and Oberleutnant-zur-See Karl-Franz Heine, were missing. They had in fact managed to nurse their badly damaged Do 17 back to Brest.

Meanwhile, 'Dirty' Watkins and Tommy Williams had watched their Do 17 ditch, and then seen at least two of the crew clamber into a dinghy. This was the aircraft commanded by Leutnant-zur-See Jürgen von Krause, who subsequently provided the following details about his bomber's demise;

'We were attacked by RAF fighters both before and after the target. My Dornier 17 had dropped back a little behind the formation and logically was the first aircraft to be attacked. I can remember a series of hits caused problems with one engine. Consequently, we lost contact with the rest of the formation, turned further out to sea to the west and dived. However, two Spitfires stayed close. We hit one of them and perhaps it was shot down, but the other one finished us off. After the second engine had seized up, we had to ditch. The aircraft sank immediately and we were lucky to get out in time and inflate our life jackets. After some time, I found our dinghy – I was able to inflate it using the compressed air – and after a few hours, we were picked up by a Dutch patrol boat, which took us to Holyhead.'

Only three of von Krause's crew were rescued, as pilot Unteroffizier Heinrich Arpert had gone down with the aircraft. 2./KüFlGr 606 also lost the Do 17 flown by Oberleutnant Friedrich Wilhelm Richter, he and his crew being killed. In the wake of these losses on 11 October, KüFlGr 606 switched almost exclusively to night attacks.

Boasting no fewer than eight MG 15 machine guns, Do 17Z U5+AN of 5./KG 2 was taxied into a bomb crater at Cambrai-Süd upon the aircraft's return from an attack on London on the night of 27 October 1940. Its crew seem quite unperturbed by this turn of events. They are, from left to right, Unteroffizier Ernst Fröhlich (PoW 15 May 1944), Leutnant Karl von Manowarda (PoW 15 May 1944), Oberfeldwebel Helmut Petraschke and Unteroffizier Ernst Geselle (killed 25 June 1942)

Towards the end of October, KG 2 tried a new tactic. Under the codename *Opernball* (Opera Ball) and termed *Zerstörangriffe* (Destroyer Attack), aircraft – either individually or in *Kette* – manned by experienced crews carried out low-level attacks normally at dawn or dusk, and in poor weather conditions, against Bomber Command airfields predominantly in East Anglia. For example, on the 27th, 3. *Staffel*'s Feldwebel Peter Broich targeted Honington, Oberleutnant Hubertus Piper of 8. *Staffel* bombed Newmarket and Oberfeldwebel Hans Wolff of 6. *Staffel* attacked Mildenhall. On the 29th, Oberleutnant Piper targeted Newmarket while Oberfeldwebel Hans Wolff bombed Wattisham.

RAF records confirm there were casualties at the airfields of Great Massingham, Mildenhall, Honington and Newmarket on 27 October, and three days later Wattisham was subjected to an attack by a Do 17 that dropped SD 2 anti-personnel 'Butterfly Bombs'. These effectively stopped all movements on the airfield for a number of hours and caused the deaths of two bomb disposal personnel and the Station Armament Officer, with one other serviceman being wounded.

The Do 17 units also suffered casualties during these missions, with Feldwebel Peter Broich's Bordmechaniker being wounded in the 27 October attack, whilst aircraft from 7. and 9./KG 3 were damaged attacking Feltwell, in Norfolk, the former returning with a dead Beobachter and the latter with a wounded Bordfunker. Three pilots from Hurricane-equipped No 1 Sqn claimed to have damaged Do 17s near Feltwell on this date. That same evening the 7./KG 76 bomber of Unteroffizier Friedhelm Ebeling

The failure of daylight attacks meant more night time raids, with the rapid switch to nocturnal bombing dictating that Do 17 units quickly modify the camouflage and markings of their aircraft to better suit such operations. Here, temporary black paint is hastily applied to a Do 17Z from KG 76 in October 1940. Note that the four-letter code and fuselage band have already been partly obscured – they would be completely gone by the time these brush-wielding groundcrew had finished with the aircraft

was shot down by future ace Plt Off Jack Ross of No 17 Sqn. Ebeling had been briefed to attack Stradishall, but his aircraft was intercepted in the Ipswich area while dropping SD 2 bombs. Inspection of the wreckage in the River Stour revealed that the Do 17 had been fitted with a new type of bomb rack capable of holding ten sub-munitions canisters, each of which contained eight SD 2s.

The remaining two months of 1940 saw a return to night attacks, with targets now extending away from London and including Coventry. Fourteen Do 17s were lost in combat in November and five in December 1940. Of these, ten were downed over or off Britain, and just three of them during daylight hours. Losses by night were attributed either to flak or accident.

A further three Do 17s were lost on operations in January 1941, namely a 6./KG 2 aircraft on the 2nd, a *Wekusta* 26 machine two days later and a 4./KG 3 bomber on the night of 15-16 January. The latter aeroplane, flown by Unteroffizier Mathias Schindler, was the first Do 17 to be downed by a dedicated nightfighter. It crashed near Brentwood, in Essex, at 0136 hrs after being intercepted by Plt Off Richard Stevens of Hurricane-equipped No 151 Sqn. None of its four-man crew survived. Future ace Stevens would also down an He 111 from 2./KG 53 four hours later.

In February, six more Dorniers were destroyed on operations, including the last Do 17 loss suffered by KüFlGr 606 (on the night of the 17th), as recalled by the pilot of the aircraft, Leutnant Günther Hübner of 3. *Staffel*;

'We flew over the Channel Islands and left Cherbourg to our right. We then took a course over Brighton to London. We saw the big "U" bend of the Thames and dropped our bombs. We changed course again and suddenly we were attacked from behind. It all went very fast. The cockpit

Not all unit insignia was obliterated by black paint in the haste to render aircraft 'invisible' to the enemy, as proven by this 7./KG 76 machine having its left propeller manually turned at Cormeilles-en-Vexin. The upright dragon emblem that adorns the bomber's nose was rarely applied to 7. *Staffel* Do 17s, although it was a common marking on the Ju 88As that were issued to the unit in place of the Dorniers shortly after this photograph was taken in late 1940

was full of smoke and the starboard engine on fire. I was not able to keep the aeroplane on course and we lost height rapidly. After his attack, we saw the nightfighter very near us. It was a Beaufighter. I soon told my crew to bail out. As the last one to leave, I had some difficulty in getting out of my seat because the aeroplane went out of control as soon as I let go of the stick. Finally, I made it.'

The Do 17 had been shot down by a Beaufighter of No 219 Sqn flown by Sqn Ldr James Little. In his combat report, Little stated the Do 17 was so slow that he had to fly a series of 'S' turns to stay behind it, before missing the stricken bomber by just ten feet when he flew directly over it.

By then only KG 2, KG 3 and KüFlGr 606 remained equipped with the Do 17 in-theatre. The following month II./KG 2 began to convert to the Do 217 and KüFlGr 606 to the Ju 88, shortly after which both I. and II./KG 3 also commenced their conversion to the Junkers twin-engined bomber. Just I. and III./KG 2 and III./KG 3 remained equipped with the Do 17 on the Channel Front by the middle of March, and only two examples were lost over Britain that month. The first to be downed was the 2./KG 3 aircraft flown by Oberleutnant Erich Kunst on the 7th, he and his crew having been briefed to carry out an armed weather reconnaissance in preparation for *Störangriff* against such targets as a ball bearing factory in Chelmsford, Essex. Although Kunst had successfully used the low cloud to hide their approach, at 0733 hrs, just off Gorleston-on-Sea, in Suffolk, his luck finally ran out. He explained what happened next when interviewed post-war;

'We flew parallel to the coast. I turned right in the direction of the sea and dropped to sea-level to avoid direct sight from the gun-layers behind the cliff. About two miles off the coast it happened. A glowing Bofors shell

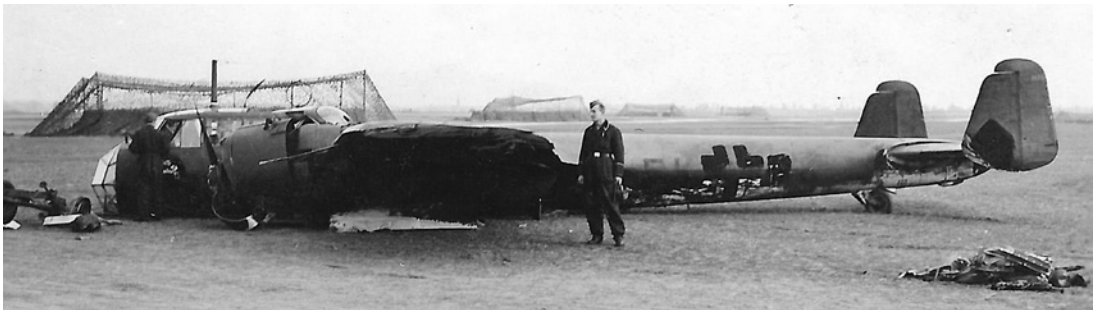
Major Klaus Uebe (far left), who assumed command of III./KG 2 on 1 September 1940 when his predecessor, Major Adolf Fuchs, was wounded, converses with visiting Italian officers from the *Regia Aeronautica* at Cambrai-Süd. The aircraft being worked on behind them has had its nose band partially blacked out. Uebe survived the war with the rank of Generalmajor

hit us from above. The starboard engine stopped and there were flames and smoke all over the starboard wing. I stalled the aircraft, feathering the starboard propeller, and tried to get height, but I had to level out at about 1000 ft. The flames and smoke vanished, but I could not get the aircraft on a straight course. It banked to port and I could not do anything to correct it. I told the crew we could not make it home, that I could not land the aircraft and that we had to bail out very quickly, since we were losing height all the time.'

Only three of the four crew that bailed out survived to become PoWs.

I. and III./KG 2 and III./KG 3 all provided aircraft for the large-scale raid that took place on the night of 13/14 March, and the aircraft from *Stab*./KG 2 commanded by Oberleutnant Hans-Jürgen von Keiser was downed by a Beaufighter of No 29 Sqn flown by future ace Flg Off Bob Braham. The four-man crew had been briefed to attack Hull, and none of them survived being shot down into the North Sea off Skegness, Lincolnshire.

The last recorded combat of 1941 for a Do 17 bomber on the Channel Front occurred off Orfordness, on the Suffolk coast, during the morning of 26 March when Flg Off Derek Forde and Plt Off Peter Thompson, flying Hurricanes with No 605 Sqn, claimed to have destroyed a Dornier of 2./KG 2. In reality, the bomber returned to its Épinoy base with minimum damage and its pilot, Oberfeldwebel Karl Fischer, wounded. This aircraft was almost certainly the last Do 17Z bomber to 'fall' in combat in the West for more than a year. Indeed, by the following month the venerable Dornier had disappeared from the Luftwaffe's Order of Battle for the *Blitz*.



Blacked out Do 17Z 5K+?T of 9./KG 3 crash-landed at Saint-Trond at the end of a mission to Britain. 9. *Staffel* clearly took the order to black out its aircraft very seriously, for even its unit insignia – the ace of hearts playing card – has been painted over beneath the nose of the bomber

NIGHT INTRUDERS

Although Do 17 bombers no longer darkened British skies, a small number of Do 17 night intruders remained operationally active in-theatre. Such missions were now being flown by I./NJG 2, which had been formed from II./NJG 1 in September 1940. The *Gruppe* flew a mix of Ju 88s and Do 17Z-10s, with the latter being part of Hauptmann Rolf Jung's 2. *Staffel*.

It is difficult to attribute many victories to the *Kauz II* as it was only used in very small numbers. For example, during the period from June to October 1940, Do 17Z-7/10s completed just 22 sorties over 19 nights. Amongst the pilots to contribute to this mission tally was Unteroffizier Vincenz Giessübel, formerly of KG 2, who flew his first intruder operation in a Do 17Z-10 on the night of 15-16 November 1940, and only managed three more before year-end. There were only two nights where Luftwaffe records specifically mention Do 17s shooting down RAF aircraft. The first was on 10-11 February 1941, when four aircraft, three of them flown by Hauptmann Rolf Jung, Oberleutnant Albert Schulz and Leutnant Johannes Feuerbaum, were involved. The first claim was made by Schulz, who reported;

'Take-off 2350 hrs, landing 0351 hrs, over target area 0100-0300 hrs. Shot down a Bristol Blenheim near airfield 10242 [West Raynham, in Norfolk] at 0110 hrs. Attack took place at 200 m [656 ft] altitude from 100 m [328 ft] distance. After the first shots, the left engine broke off. The aeroplane spun vertically over the right wing. A crash could not be observed because Defiant or Spitfire nightfighters attacked the Do 17.

Although of poor quality, this photograph is worthy of publication as it shows a very rare Do 17Z-7 or Z-10 nightfighter from 5./ NJG 1 (later 2./NJG 2) at Gilze-Rijen, in the Netherlands, during the winter of 1940-41. The unit actively flew intruder missions over Britain during this period

Own aircraft was shot at by nightfighters four times without success. Dropped 120 incendiary bombs from 800 m [2624 ft] altitude on airfield 10841 [Weybourne, in Norfolk] at 0205 hrs. Several persistent fires observed in barracks and airfield installations.'

Schulz's claim was optimistic, for no losses can be attributed to his attack. Furthermore, he was actually overhead RAF Coltishall, in Norfolk, where Spitfires of No 222 Sqn and Hurricanes of the recently re-formed No 255 Sqns were carrying out night-flying practice. No 222 Sqn's ORB noted;

'While night flying was in progress at about midnight, one enemy aircraft was seen by Sgt [Rainford] Marland to be making the circuit behind the aircraft flown by Sgt [Norman] Ramsay, who was then fired upon. Sgt Marland made five separate attacks on this enemy aircraft, which was identified as an Me 110. Shortly afterwards incendiary bombs were dropped and two hangars sustained slight damage. A second stick was dropped, and it is believed that an enemy aircraft was then intercepted by a Hurricane [Sgt Leslie Barnes of No 257 Sqn] and chased out to sea.'

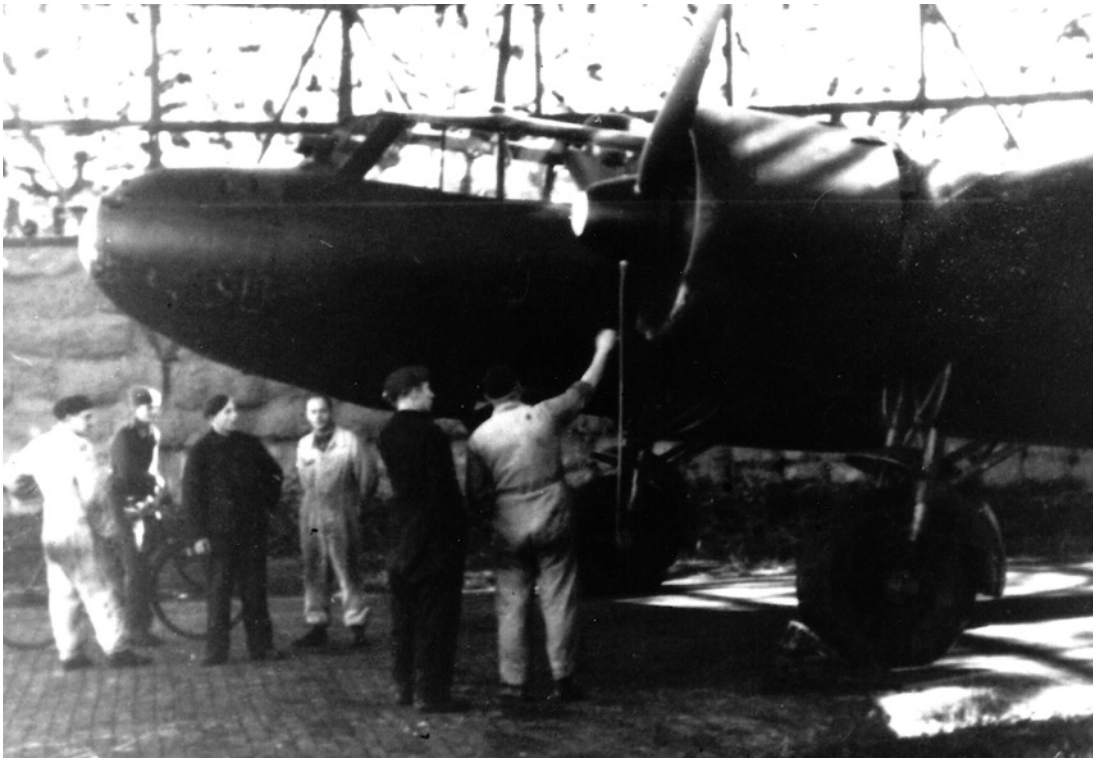
Hauptmann Jung and his crew were the next to claim, reporting;

'Take-off at 2345 hrs, landing at 0346 hrs, over target area 0100-0300 hrs. Observed four landing aircraft near illuminated airfield 10280. Own aeroplane was detected too early. The lights of the airfield were switched off. Dropped 120 incendiary bombs on accommodation and hangars from 0100-0145 hrs in three attacks from 500 m [1640 ft] altitude. Observed numerous persistent fires. Fired at fire brigade crews in six low-level attacks. Observed six landing aircraft at airfield 10242 at 0220 hrs. Attacked an aircraft at 100 m [328 ft] altitude, and its navigation lights were immediately switched off. Further pursuit was without any result. Shot down a Wellington near 10242 at 200 m [656 ft] altitude at 0230 hrs. After two bursts of fire, the right engine burned and the aircraft exploded in the air.

'Despite the air combat there was well-aimed light anti-aircraft fire, six hits in own machine. Attacked a Bristol Blenheim with three bursts near Great Yarmouth at 800 m [2624 ft] altitude at 0300 hrs. The Blenheim was shooting recognition signals (red-yellow). Hits and fire effect recognised perfectly. Further observation of the aircraft was not possible. Subsequent loss of the aircraft can be expected.'

The only loss that can be attributed to Jung was a Wellington from No 115 Sqn, captained by Sgt Harry Rogers, that was returning from an attack on Hannover. The pilot managed to crash-land at Narborough, near Swaffham in Norfolk, with just the rear gunner suffering injuries.

The final kill that can be attributed to a Do 17Z-10 went to recently promoted Feldwebel Vincenz Giessübel, who shot down a No 10 Operational Training Unit Wellington, captained by Sgt Phillip Nicholls, over RAF Bassingbourne, in Cambridgeshire, at 0050 hrs on 24 April 1941, the bomber crashing onto, and destroying, a second Wellington parked in a dispersal pen on the airfield. It was Giessübel's 37th operational sortie of the war. He would continue to fly the Do 17Z-10 with 2./NJG 2 on a further 33 operational missions, although he failed to increase his score. Giessübel's last operational flight in a Do 17Z came on 13 October 1941, after which he exclusively flew the Ju 88.



This Do 17Z-10 of 2./NJG 2 was fitted with an infra-red (IR) Spanner Anlage illuminator within its 'solid' nose fairing and a scope protruding through the cockpit windscreen. This was an active IR system, using IR illumination from the Spanner Anlage rather than relying on passive detection of aircraft exhaust radiation. The illuminator had a maximum range of 650 ft and 'painted' the target aircraft in a red glow, although there was no visible light emanating from the Do 17Z

Do 17Z-10 losses were understandably light due to the small number of airframes involved. On 9 November 1940, Oberfeldwebel Herbert Schmidt's Wk-Nr. 2817, coded R4+HK, was damaged in combat, and then on 5 February 1941 Oberleutnant Otto Hauser's Wk-Nr. 2859, coded R4+BK, went missing on an intruder sortie. The second, and last, combat loss, which was also the final Do 17 to crash on British soil, came on 8 May 1941 when Feldwebel Wilhelm Lettenmeier's Wk-Nr. 2843, coded R4+GK, was intercepted by a Beaufighter of No 25 Sqn flown by Plt Off David Thompson. The latter had difficulty getting behind the German aircraft due to its slow speed, but when in position, he fired three bursts. Unteroffizier Herbert Thomas, who was part of Lettenmeier's crew, recalled what happened next;

'There was an awful crash and grinding noise and the port engine began to burn brightly. The noise was terrific. My first reaction was to get the canopy clear, close the fuel tap, cut the ignition, cut everything. I went to help Lettenmeier, but our Dornier simply went down. The fire closed on the cockpit, and together we gave the command to get out. Tracers went under me and the Bola [ventral gun position], but I could not find the switch for the bail out buzzer, so with a great effort I forced open the hatch against the air stream. I climbed into the Bordfunkers' position and, to my surprise, found that Georg [Unteroffizier Herden] was still at his post. I screamed at him to jump, and together we got out.'

Both survived, but Lettenmeier was killed.

On around 13 October 1941, intruder missions over Britain ceased by order of the *Führer*.

Many training units operated all variants of Do 17, with this particular Z-model being assigned to *Grosse Kampffliegerschule* 2 at Hörsching. The badge on the nose of the bomber is a quartered black and white shield, onto which a winged propeller and bomb, arrows and lightning bolts have been superimposed

CHAPTER SIX

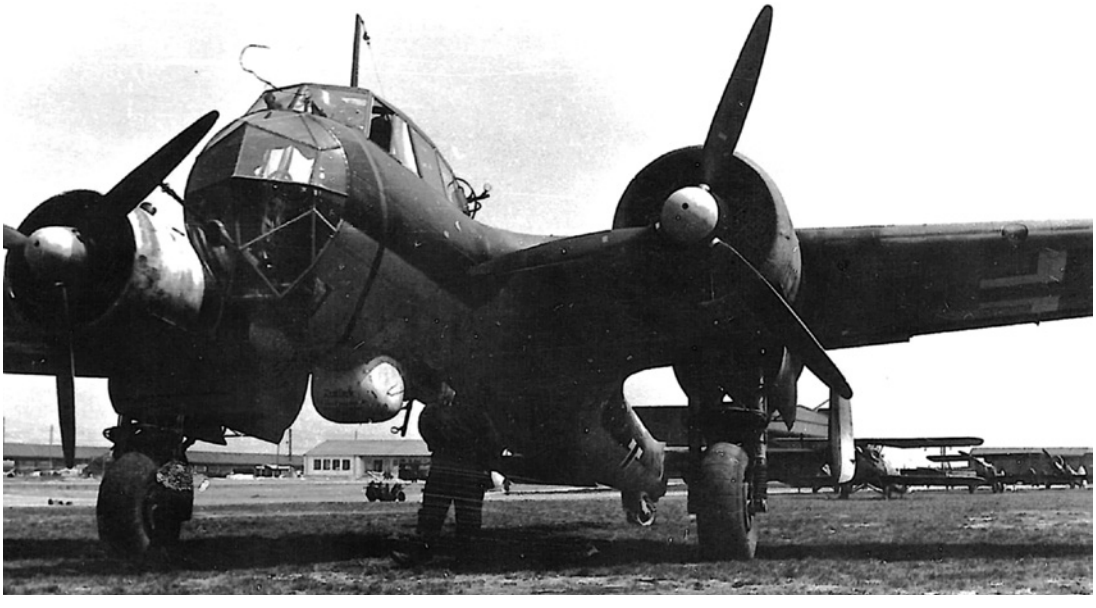
NEW HORIZONS

As Do 17 operations wound down on the Channel Front, the aircraft now began to appear in new skies. On 6 April 1941, German forces attacked the Balkans. The only Do 17 units involved in this campaign were 2.(F)/11, *Stab.*, I., 6. *Staffel* and III./KG 2 and III./KG 3, which tallied a maximum of 105 aircraft between them. As had been the case in the Battle of France, Ju 87-equipped StG 2 was also assigned six Do 17Ps for pre-attack reconnaissance and post-strike evaluation of bombing results.

Attrition was light compared to operations over France and Britain in 1940, with KG 2, as the main Do 17 unit, suffering the most casualties. Up to the end of May 1941, by which time the campaign had spread to Greece and its many islands, KG 2 had lost 14 aircraft as a direct result of enemy action, most of which were downed by flak. Included in the casualties were Hauptmann Konrad Ebsen, *Kapitän* of the *Stabstaffel*, who was killed on 16 April (the fourth *Stab Kapitän* to be lost in combat since 13 August 1940), and Major Heinrich Eichhorn, *Kommandeur* of III./KG 2, captured on 21 May.

III./KG 3 would lose three Do 17s in combat in the same period, 2.(F)/11 had two aircraft shot down on the very first day of operations in the Balkans, with three crew captured and three missing, and *Stab*./StG 2 suffered a solitary combat loss. All units had many more aircraft suffering varying degrees of combat damage, with a significant number also destroyed

RIGHT
Three Belgrade-bound Do 17s from I./KG 2 head for the Yugoslavian capital during the bombing offensive that was waged over Easter 1941. All of the aircraft have had their cowlings painted yellow, which was the Luftwaffe's widely adopted theatre marking for the campaign in the Balkans. Yellow also featured on the rudders of a number of aircraft types in-theatre

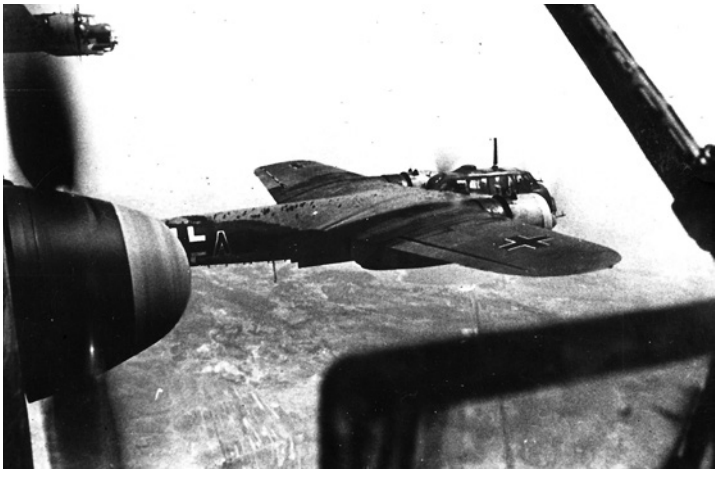


This III./KG 2 aircraft was photographed at an unidentified airfield during the Balkans campaign. With all traces of night *Blitz* blackout paint removed, the Do 17Z boasts a red *Gruppe* band on the nose but no unit insignia. III./KG 2 had flown from Wien-Zwölfaxing, in Austria, during the early stages of the operation

in accidents. By the invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, StG 2 had exchanged its few remaining, worn-out, Do 17Ps for Bf 110s.

A number of Do 17 pilots distinguished themselves either over Yugoslavia, Greece or Crete while carrying out low-level attacks, just as they had done in France the previous year. Three, Leutnant Heinrich Hunger of *Stab*./KG 2, Hauptmann Walter Bradel of 9./KG 2 and Oberleutnant Willi Dous of 8./KG 3, would receive the *Ritterkreuz* during the summer of 1941 as a result.

Following the successful conclusion to the campaign in the Balkans, the Do 17 units did not return to bases in France, Belgium and Holland, but went back to Germany instead for a brief period of rest and re-equipment in preparation for Operation *Barbarossa* (the invasion of the Soviet Union), which began just before dawn on 22 June 1941. The same Do 17-equipped units that had participated in the attack on Yugoslavia, less StG 2, also took part in the attack – they were joined by *Wekusta* 1 and 26. Although a maximum of 151 Do 17s were reported as being available on 21 June 1941 for *Barbarossa*, within six months this type was almost extinct as a frontline combat aircraft.



Losses began to mount up within hours of the invasion commencing, German aircrew discovering to their horror that even if they managed to bail out, they would be lucky to survive if captured. KG 2 lost one aircraft on 22 June 1941 (with another three damaged),

A *Kette* of Do 17Zs from III./KG 2 fly low over Athens during a victory parade staged over the city on 3 May 1941. The aircraft nearest to the camera is a *Stab* III./KG 2 machine, while the bomber furthest away is from 9./KG 2. The middle aircraft's specific *Staffel* allocation remains unknown

Oberfeldwebel Erich Stockmann of *Stab*./KG 2 and his gunner being killed and his Beobachter and *Staffelkapitän,* Oberleutnant Hans-Georg Peters, captured – the latter was quickly executed. Only the Bordfunker managed to escape, albeit with wounds. 2.(F)/11 suffered two aircraft damaged the following day, and 48 hours later lost its first aircraft on an operational flight. 8. *Staffel* would be the first to lose an aircraft from III./KG 3, on 28 June, when it crashed near Minsk.

On 29 June a new unit appears to have lost its first aircraft when Do 17P Wk-Nr. 3540 KB+OB from 1. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* (night reconnaissance squadron) was downed over Belarus, with the deaths of Unteroffizier Friedrich Steeger and his two crew. Operating from Suwalaki, 1. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* was formed in June

A crew from *Stab.*/KG 2 pose with their aircraft at Arys-Rostken on the eve of *Barbarossa* in June 1941. They are, from left to right, unknown groundcrew, Unteroffizier Willi Schludecker, Leutnant Walter Hosemann, Feldwebel Hein Bühr and Gefreiter Alfons Bemmelmanns. All bar Hosemann, who would be killed in action on 21 October 1941, survived the war

LEFT
It would appear that KüFlGr 606 handed over some of its Do 17Z-5s to I./KG 2 when the unit switched to the Ju 88A in early 1941. This aircraft is from 2. *Staffel*, and it still has the Z-5's distinctive bulges on the nose. I./KG 2 was very much in the vanguard of the action in both the Balkans and the Soviet Union during the spring and summer of 1941, its aircraft featuring the white nose band seen here. The yellow rear fuselage band also visible on the bomber was a theatre marking applied for *Barbarossa*. I./KG 2 had moved to Göttingen from Athens-Tatoi on 1 June 1941 in preparation for the invasion of the USSR, flying to Arys-Rostken, on Germany's border with Poland, 17 days later. It was subsequently based at Suwalki, Silce, Wereteni and Rjelbitzy during the summer of 1941

1941 and would be joined by 2. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel*, based at Dubowa, and which would not lose its first aircraft until March 1942, and 3. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel*, at Kowno – this unit suffered its first loss on 6 July 1941. They were joined by 4. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* in August 1942, which lost its first aircraft two months later.

Unfortunately, little is known about the operations of the various *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel*. Their most successful pilot was Major Franz Kusatz, who commanded 1. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* in 1942 and was awarded the *Deutsches Kreuz* in *Gold* in December 1941, *Ehrenpokal* (honour goblet) in July 1942 and, posthumously, the *Ritterkreuz* four months later.

It would appear that German air superiority over the Soviet Union in 1941-42 gave a lease of life to *Aufklärungsgruppe* 11, which reported Do 17Ps operating with 3. and 4. *Staffel* during this period, whilst 1.(F)/33 was also flying a number of elderly P-models in-theatre at this time. However, as the war in the East continued, it was eventually left to the *Nachtaufklärungsstaffeln* to fly the flag for the Do 17P, whilst the last reported operational loss for 2.(F)/11 was a Do 17Z on 27 September 1942.

The intensity of operations in the East is best shown by the experiences of two KG 2 pilots. In February 1941, Leutnant Karl von Manowarda of 5./KG 2 was posted with his crew to 11./KG 2 at Achmer and then Schwerin for further training. As a result, he missed taking part in the attack on Yugoslavia, Greece and Crete. On 21 June, von Manowarda undertook a transport flight to I./KG 2's airfield at Rostken, after which he flew two operational missions targeting Soviet troops near Grodno on 24 and 25 June. A few more transport flights followed, and then he flew an operational mission from III./KG 2's base at Dubowo-Süd against troops and barracks northeast of Polocz on 3 July, after which he returned to Schwerin.

Von Manowarda returned to the East to fly with *Stab.*/KG 2 from Vitebsk from 21 October, completing a further eight operational missions in the Do 17 before returning to Germany on 11 November. On 15 January 1942 he made his first flight in a Do 217. However, von Manowarda would fly the Do 17 operationally over England again three months later, albeit it for just under a week. He then switched permanently to the Do 217.

Unteroffizier Willi Schludecker first flew in Hauptmann Walter Bradel's 9./KG 2 in an attack on Elasson, in Greece, on 15 April 1941. Like Karl von Manowarda, he was then posted to IV./KG 2 and undertook transport flights, prior to participating in his second operational flight of the war on 23 June. Schludecker was then posted to *Stab.*/KG 2 on 22 July 1941, completing his first mission with the *Stabstaffel* the following

An aircraft from 7./KG 3 has its engines warmed up at snow-covered Wjasma airfield, near Smolensk, in November -December 1941. The unit returned from here to Germany to convert to the Ju 88 shortly after this photograph was taken. Note the yellow fuselage band and the ace of clubs insignia beneath the cockpit, the latter marking having first been seen on Do 17s from 7. *Staffel* more than two years earlier

day with *Staffelkapitän* Oberleutnant Gerd Mock (who had taken over from Oberleutnant Hans-Georg Peters after the latter had been killed on 22 June).

On Schludecker's ninth flight, on 28 July, his aircraft was attacked by Soviet fighters and he force-landed Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2543 U5+JA in German-held territory. Having abandoned their aircraft, the crew was shot at by Wehrmacht soldiers who mistook their flying suits for Red Army uniforms. Gerd Mock was fatally wounded, thus becoming KG 2's sixth *Stabstaffel Kapitän* to be killed or captured in 11 months. Schludecker returned to combat ten days later with a new Beobachter, Leutnant Walter Hosemann. By 3 September, he and his crew had flown a further 23 missions, at which point they returned to Germany for a short break. Back in action in the East on 16 September, Schludecker flew his 34th mission, against Soviet warships, in Lake Ladoga, the following day.

October would be a short month operationally for some of the Schludecker crew, for on the morning of the 8th, on their 56th operational flight, their Do 17Z (Wk-Nr. 3606 U5+KA) was hit by flak over Cholm. With a burning engine, they managed a force-landing at Baranowa. Just 12 days later Schludecker and his crew were shot down again, Do 17Z-2 Wk-Nr. 3356 U5+MK, formerly of 2. *Staffel*, being hit by ground fire in the cockpit. With Leutnant Hosemann having been killed and the port engine set on fire, Schludecker again force-landed and the aircraft was written off. Theirs was the last Do 17 from KG 2 to be lost over the Soviet Union, and on 25 October the crew flew back to Germany. Schludecker subsequently completed his first flight in a Do 217 on 16 January 1942.

The *Kampfgeschwader* equipped with the Do 17Z spent only a limited time in the East, with III./KG 2 having returned by 26 September 1941 and I./KG 2 following suit by 1 November. Both units would convert to the Do 217 shortly thereafter. III./KG 3 also commenced its return home in November, where it would convert to the Ju 88. All of its crews (but apparently not its aircraft) had gone by Christmas. The last recorded bomber loss was III. *Gruppe* Do 17Z-2 Wk-Nr 2633 5K+AT, which was downed by flak near Volokolamsk, 80 miles northwest of Moscow, on 11 December 1941. Its pilot, Feldwebel Fritz Metsch, and his gunner were killed, with the remaining two crew wounded.

One Do 17 bomber *Staffel* did remain in the East into 1942, however. When Croatian volunteers were called to fight the Soviet Union, the Air Force Legion was raised. In addition to boasting two Bf 109-equipped fighter units, the Legion's Croatian Air Force Regiment formed a bomber unit that was initially designated 5 *Zrakoplovna bombaska skupina*. By the end of July 1941, this unit (led by Maj Vjekoslav Vicevic) was being trained at *Grosse Kampffliegerschule* 3 at Greifswald. It was then equipped with the Do 17Z and arrived at Vitebsk on 22 October 1941, where the unit would operate with III./KG 3 as 10.(*kroat*)/KG 3.

Oberleutnant Ivan Pavelic and his crew flew the *Staffel*'s first mission, against the city of Yarapolec, on 25 October. The first aircraft to be lost on operations was Do 17Z-3 Wk-Nr. 3443 5K+BU, which suffered combat damage over Volokolamsk two days later and force-landed near Smolensk, with pilot Hauptmann Stanko Kovacevic and two crew being wounded.

With III./KG 3 having returned to Germany by December 1941, its Do 17s were taken over by the Croatian *Staffel*, which now became 15.(*kroat*)/KG 53 and subordinate to Major Richard Fabian's He 111-equipped III./KG 53. They remained in the East until November 1942, when the Luftwaffe decided that a sole Do 17Z *Staffel* could do little to help the war effort with its obsolete and vulnerable aircraft. On 13 November the surviving eight aircraft headed back to Croatia, with one Dornier suffering engine failure and its crew having to force-land en route. The unit had completed 1332 combat missions prior to its withdrawal.

The Croatian Do 17s would now be employed on anti-partisan missions, but with losses, increasing unserviceability and defecting crews, their effectiveness lessened to such an extent that by July 1944, only five Do 17s were still able to fly. On the 21st of that month the unit was disbanded, with the remaining aircraft being flown back to Germany – during the flight another crew defected to Italy.

On 30 July 1944, Do 17Z-5 Wk-Nr. 2899 Z8+AH of the recently disbanded 1./*Kampfgruppe Kroatien* crash-landed at Cerignola, just south of Foggia in Italy. Having taken off from Lučko, ostensibly bound for Königsberg, its crew (Leutnante Albin Vouk, Andrija Pavïšïć, Ivan Pernar, Antun Jozein and Jusuf Ustavdić) turned the aircraft towards the Adriatic instead and defected to the Allies. The bomber is seen here being inspected by personnel from the USAAF

BAEDEKER *BLITZ*

There would be one more very short air campaign that would see a few Do 17s operating as bombers against Britain. In response to attacks on Lübeck by Bomber Command in March 1942, and on the direct orders of the *Führer*, the Lutfwaffe planned a series of raids against every city in Britain marked with three stars in the Baedeker travel guide to Great Britain. The first targets to be hit were Bath, Norwich, York and Exeter, with the first attack being mounted against the latter city on the night of 23-24 April 1942. It was also the

last to be bombed, on 3-4 May, although some historians state that such attacks continued afterwards, the raid on Canterbury on 31 May-1 June 1942 being cited as an example of this.

Oberleutnant Karl von Manowarda was still converting to the Do 217 when the campaign commenced, so, on the afternoon of 25 April, he and his crew flew in veteran Do 17Z U5+AV from Achmer to Evreux, and that evening attacked Bath with one SC 250 and ten SC 50 bombs. Landing at 0127 hrs, von Manowarda was airborne again at 0644 hrs with a Bf 109 escort to search for Unteroffizier Siegfried Kuglat's Do 17Z-1 Wk-Nr 2507 U5+GW of 10./KG 2, which had failed to return from the attack on Bath.

Early on the morning of 27 April 1942, von Manowarda took off with the same bomb load to attack Bath for a second time, and that evening he targeted Norwich. The crew dropped its bombs from 5900 ft and reported heavy flak, searchlights and being attacked twice by a nightfighter. Von Manowarda returned to Norwich again on the night of 29 April, before heading back to Achmer two days later to complete his conversion to the Do 217. He was then posted to I./KG 2 and flew his first operational mission in the new aircraft, against Norwich, on 9 May.

In addition to the loss of Unteroffizier Kuglat, two more Do 17s from IV./KG 2 were destroyed during the Baedeker *Blitz*. Leutnant Helmut Schobbert of 10./KG 2 failed to return from the Bath raid on the night of 26-27 April, his Do 17Z-3 Wk-Nr. 4236 U5+BW coming down in the Channel, with all four crew killed. On the night of 3-4 May, Oberfeldwebel Albert Heyer of 12./KG 2 failed to return from Exeter, his Do 17Z-1 Wk-Nr. 3306 U5+CW crashing in the Channel off the Isle of Portland, on the Dorset coast – again, the four-man crew perished.

Kuglat's aircraft was shot down by future ace Sqn Ldr Johnny Topham of No 219 Sqn 40 miles south of Worthing, on the Sussex coast, at 2345 hrs. What caused Schobbert's loss remains unclear, as no nightfighter pilot claimed a Do 17 or Do 217 destroyed, although three reported to have damaged a Do 217 near Bath. Finally, Heyer's loss was attributed to a Beaufighter of No 604 Sqn. Although Sqn Ldr Stanley Skinner probably destroyed a Do 217 near Portland at 0218 hrs, it was more likely that ace Flt Lt Edward Crew and his radar operator Plt Off Basil Duckett accounted for the last Do 17 to be shot down in combat on the Channel Front. Crew's combat report read as follows;

'Fighter was then given a turn to port while still climbing and again obtained a visual of enemy

There were four *Nachtaufkärungsstaffeln*, numbered 1 to 4, and they operated over the Eastern Front from the summer of 1941 onwards, initially flying elderly Do 17M/Ps that were eventually replaced by more modern aircraft (including Do 17Zs). This photograph shows a mix of all-black Do 17Ps and Zs, possibly at Dubowo, in Poland, in the late summer of 1941. Just visible on the fuselage of the aircraft third in line is the unit code K7

aircraft at 2000 ft range and above. Fighter then closed in to a firing position of 100 yards range and identified enemy aircraft as a Dornier by the silhouette. Fighter opened fire from dead astern while slowly closing in. Large flashes came off the fuselage and bits and pieces were heard to hit the Beaufighter. The enemy aircraft turned sharply to port and went down in a steep dive on fire. Fighter turned after it to watch it going down but lost sight of it and did not see anything hit the sea. The combat took place at 0140 hrs at a height of 18,500 ft in the Portland area. On landing, a piece of wire several feet long which might be a bit of enemy aircraft's aerial was found wound round the starboard airscrew [propeller] of the Beaufighter.'

No other Do 17s or Do 217s were lost that night, and on 5 September 1942 the body of Oberfeldwebel Franz Warwas, Heyer's Beobachter, was washed up on Chesil Beach, Dorset. He was wearing the silver *Frontflugspange* (Front Flying Clasp) awarded to aircrew who had completed 60 missions, proving that this crew, like von Manowarda's, was experienced and appears to have been hand-picked for the attacks.

DECLINE

Apart from 15.(*kroat*)/KG 53 and those aircraft committed and lost attacking Britain in April-May 1942, by the autumn of 1942 the only major operational users of the Do 17 were 2.(F)/11 and the *Nachtaufklärungsstaffeln* in the Soviet Union. 2.(F)/11 reported its last accident with a Dornier (specifically Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2876 6M+EK) on 1 October 1942, after which it converted to the Ju 88.

By then the *Nachtaufklärungsstaffeln* were handing over their Do 17s for other types. 1. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* had all but converted to the Do 217 and He 111 by January 1943, 2. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* had switched to the Do 217 in February 1943, 3. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* followed suit five months later and 4. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* began its conversion in August. All four *Staffeln* retained small numbers of Do 17s for training, however, and the last reported mention of such an aircraft was an accident to aged Do 17M Wk-Nr. 2297 from 2. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* at Orscha-Süd on 20 April 1943.

Many training and communications units operated a mix of aircraft that included the Do 17, including *Luftlandegeschwader* (LLG) 1, which was tasked with supporting paratroopers. It seems to have been in France and Italy in 1943, and also apparently participated in the supply and evacuation of the Wehrmacht's 17th Army at Kuban, in the Caucasus region of the southern USSR, between February and October 1943 – Do 17s from the unit acted both as glider tugs and transports. In December 1944, 2./ LLG 1 was reformed at Altenstadt as *Schleppstaffel zbv Reich*, commanded by Hauptmann Klaus-Dieter Reich, and equipped with around 18 Do 17s and 18 DFS 230 gliders. In February 1945, this unit was re-designated 4./*Schleppgruppe* 1. *Schleppgruppen* 1 and 3 reported they still both had small numbers of Do 17s on strength as late as February 1945.

Records from the final months of the Luftwaffe are fragmented and missing, especially those pertaining to non-frontline aircraft. According to surviving documentation, the last Do 17 to be involved in an accident, on

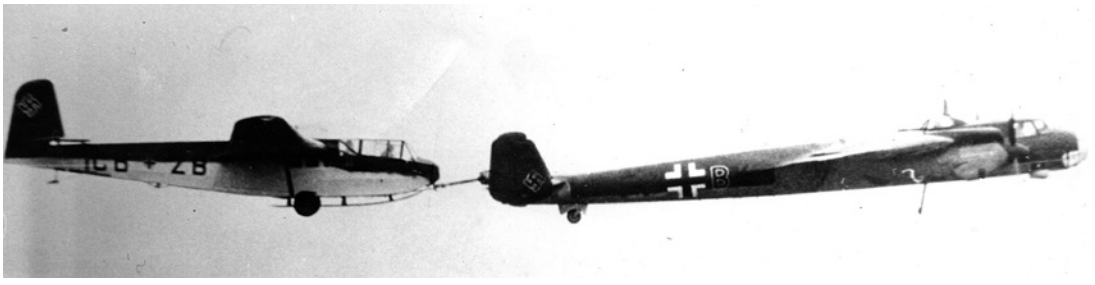
4 February 1945, was E-model Wk-Nr. 3088 from *Schleppstaffel zbv Reich*. The last recorded combat loss of a Do 17 is thought to have occurred four months prior on 10 October 1944, when Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 3240 9H+EL of *Nahaufklärungsstaffel Kroatien* was shot down three miles northeast of Kriz, in Croatia. Little is known about the unit that this aircraft was assigned to, which was formed in Agram, Croatia, in April 1943. *Nahaufklärungsstaffel Kroatien* subsequently operated Henschel Hs 126 army reconnaissance and observation aircraft from a number of bases in the region. The unit also had a maximum of four Do 17Ms, Ps and Zs.

On 10 October, Hauptmann Georg Stark, Major Paul Lube (*Fliegerführer Nord Balkans*) and Gefreiter Helmut Fischer were all wounded and Unteroffizier Ernst Weise killed. They had fallen victim to the No 39 Sqn Beaufighter flown by Plt Off Ian Wallace, who had spotted the Do 17 (thinking it was a Do 217) coming into land at Borongaj, near Zagreb, and promptly shot it down. The unit's ORB that day read as follows;

'Almost clear skies and unlimited visibility enabled six Beaufighters to carry out an attack against barracks and sidings at Kriz, Yugoslavia, this morning. The aircraft led by Sqn Ldr Payne attacked the target and caused damage to three barrack buildings and 30 box cars in the sidings. As the aircraft were leaving the target they saw a Do 217[sic] returning to Zagreb aerodrome. Plt Off Wallace DFM attacked immediately, causing damage to the Do's starboard engine and the enemy aircraft made a crash landing. It was again attacked on the ground and burst into flames as the petrol tanks blew up. Return fire was at first encountered from the Do's rear gun, but Plt Off Wallace silenced this during his attacks.'

Hauptmann Georg Stark, an experienced reconnaissance officer, had undertaken his first missions with 2.(H)/14 in 1940 and had been lucky to survive this long. Austrian Major Paul Lube also had a very full war mainly as a Staff Officer, but latterly with 7.(F)/LG 2 and *Nahaufklärungsgruppe* 9. He would be promoted to Oberstleutnant shortly after being shot down.

This Do 17Z was one of a number of former Dornier bombers stripped of their weaponry and used by units such as LLG 1 as fast transports and communications aircraft following their removal from a frontline *Kampfgeschwader*. It was photographed at an Italian airfield in 1942-43



Towards the end of the war the Do 17 proved itself to be a suitable glider tug. Indeed, in December 1944 2./LLG 1 was reformed at Altenstadt as *Schleppstaffel zbv Reich*, commanded by Hauptmann Klaus-Dieter Reich, and equipped with 18 Do 17s and 18 DFS 230 gliders. Here, a very old Do 17E is acting as a tug for a DFS 230

By war's end, the remains of Do 17s littered airfields of northwest Europe and in the East. Nevertheless, as with so many other important combat aircraft types of World War 2, no examples of any variant were preserved. However, in 2013 this changed. Local fishermen plying their trade out of ports on the Kent coast were aware of the presence of numerous aircraft on the Goodwin Sands, and in 2008 one such well known wreck gradually began re-emerging from the seabed, eventually lying some 52 ft from the surface. The aircraft, resting on its back, appeared to have two engines, and as it had an open section (bomb-bay) in the centre of the fuselage, it was clearly a bomber.

Side-scan sonar imagery of the wreck was carried out in 2008-09, at which time it was clearly identified as a Do 17Z. This was later confirmed by dives on the wreck and multi-beam scan sonar imagery carried out in 2011. The RAF Museum had experience of recovering wartime aircraft, and now saw a perfect opportunity to salvage the world's only remaining Do 17 – the 'missing link' in its Battle of Britain aircraft collection. However, a formal announcement that the bomber was to be brought up was not made until 3 May 2013, and the following day a floating recovery platform was positioned over the wreck.

It had taken more than three years of planning, fund raising and research by the RAF's Air Historical Branch to get to this point. The latter believed that the wreck was Do 17Z-2 Wk-Nr. 1160 5K+AR of 7./KG 3, lost on 26 August 1940. There was uncertainty as to whether human remains or ordnance might be found when the wreck was raised.

Divers had conducted a detailed survey of the aircraft in preparation for installing a specially constructed lightweight lifting frame around the wreckage, and they reported that the now-exposed aircraft had survived the winter storms of 2012-13. Conditions on-site were always difficult, with tides only allowing 50-90 minutes of diving per day in visibility of no more than 16 ft. Divers found that various sections of the airframe were in a particularly fragile state – something that the RAF Museum had anticipated, hence the building of the specialist lifting frame. It was expected that the recovery would take three to four weeks to complete, dependant on the weather and tides.

Getting the aircraft to the surface and then onto land was just the beginning of its preservation. Being immersed in sea water for more than 70 years meant that as soon as the Do 17 was exposed to the atmosphere, it would quickly start corroding to such an extent that the remains would eventually disintegrate. The RAF Museum, therefore, intended housing the aircraft in two purpose-built hydration tunnels, each measuring 65 ft x 23 ft and 11.5 ft in height, at RAF Cosford, in Shropshire.

The recovery of the Goodwin Sands Do 17 by the RAF Museum on 10 June 2013. The remains of this aircraft are now housed at the RAF Museum Cosford, and despite intensive conservation over the past six years, the Dornier has still not revealed its true identity

Each tunnel boasted a moisture spray system, with 36 nozzles hanging down from the ceiling that allowed the remains to be continually soaked. The water would disperse via a drainage system in the floor of each tunnel, after which it passed through special filters prior to returning to a tank and then being pumped back into the hydration tunnels. Before being re-circulated, a reading would be taken of the water to ensure that it was of the right pH value to gently wash away the salts and chemicals that had accreted to the airframe over time without damaging the paintwork or any of the components within the wings and the fuselage.

The first recovery was planned for 2-3 June 2013, but this had to be postponed due to adverse weather and tidal conditions. Meteorological delays, coupled with seabed geology issues, also forced a change in the recovery methodology. Instead of installing a frame around the Dornier, the rear fuselage was reinforced and lifting strops attached to known strong points on the airframe. As the aircraft lay inverted on the seabed, access to these strong points was not problematic, and at 1826 hrs on 10 June, the Do 17 was successfully raised largely intact. It was then transported to Ramsgate Docks, and the following day began its journey to RAF Cosford, where the conservation and identification would take place.

However, as of 2019, the Goodwin Sands Do 17Z has still to reveal its true identity.

APPENDICES

MAJOR Do 17 COMBAT UNITS

1 September 1939 (invasion of Poland)

3.(F)/10	Do 17P	Wiesenhof	?
2.(F)/11	Do 17P	Bad Polzin	?
3.(F)/11	Do 17P	?	Major Hans-Jürgen von Berchem
4.(F)/11	Do 17P	?	Hauptmann Karl-Heinz Kirchbach?
4.(F)/14	Do 17P	Markendorf	Hauptmann Franz Kusatz
1.(F)/22	Do 17P	Frankfurt Rebstock	Hauptmann Hans Dietrich?
2.(F)/22	Do 17P	Bonn-Hangelar	Hauptmann Ernst Blauensteiner?
3.(F)/22	Do 17P	Koblenz	Majors Hans von Barsewitsch/Alois Schneider?
3.(F)/31	Do 17P	Stubendorf	Hauptmann Borsikow?
1.(F)/120	Do 17P	Neuhausen	Major Anton Schub
1.(F)/121	Do 17P/F	Stargard	Oberleutnant Arnold Klinkicht
2.(F)/121	Do 17P/F	Schönfeld	Major Alfred Wenz
3.(F)/121	Do 17P/F	Stargard	Oberleutnant Wilhelm Knapp?
4.(F)/121	Do 17P/F	Jesau	Hauptmann Ulrich Kerber
1.(F)/122	Do 17P	Goslar	Hauptmann Waldemar Wappenhaus
3.(F)/122	Do 17P	Woisseldorf	Major Roman Schneider
1.(F)/123	Do 17P	Ansbach	Hauptmann Helmut Wippersteg
2.(F)/123	Do 17P	Würzburg	Hauptmann Balduin von Normann
3.(F)/123	Do 17P	Schweidnitz	Hauptmann Reinhard Liebe-Piderit
1.(F)/124	Do 17P	Schosswalden	Oberleutnant Hans Stockhausen
KG 2	Do 17Z	Jesau	Oberst Johannes Fink
I./KG 2	Do 17M	Liegnitz	Major Werner Krahl
II./KG 2	Do 17Z	Schippenbeil	Oberstleutnant Paul Weitkus
KG 3	Do 17Z	Elbing	Oberst Wolfgang Chamier-Glisczinski
II/KG 3	Do 17Z	Heiligenbeil	Major Erich Munske
III./KG 3	Do 17Z	Heiligenbeil	Oberstleutnant Karl Neuhüttler
KG 76	Do 17Z	Breslau	Oberstleutnant Paul Schultheiss
I./KG 76	Do 17Z	Breslau	Oberstleutnant Stefan Fröhlich
III./KG 76	Do 17Z	Rosenborn	Major Hans Hofmann
KG 77	Do 17E/F	Grottkau	Oberst Heinrich Seywald
I./KG 77	Do 17E	Brieg	Major Rolf Balcke
II./KG 77	Do 17E	Grottkau	Oberst Karl Angerstein
III./KG 77	Do 17E	Brieg	Oberst Wolf von Stutterheim
I./StG 1	Do 17P	Elbing	Hauptmann Paul Hozzel
I./StG 2	Do 17P	Nieder	Major Oskar Dinort
II./StG 2	Do 17P	Stolp	Hauptmann Ulrich Schmidt
III./StG 2	Do 17P	Stolp	Hauptmann Ernst Ott
III./StG 51	Do 17P	Wertheim	Major Heinrich von Klitzing
I./StG 76	Do 17P	Nieder	Hauptmann Walter Sigel
I./StG 77	Do 17P	Ottmuth	Hauptmann Friedrich-Karl von Dalwigk
II./StG 77	Do 17P	Neudorf	Hauptmann Clemens von Schönborn
IV.(Stuka)/LG 1	Do 17P	Stolp	Hauptmann Peter Kögl
7.(F)/LG 2	Do 17P/F	Deckenpfronn	Hauptmann Joachim Gerndt
8.(F)/LG 2	Do 17P/F	Berlin-Werder	Oberleutnant Fritz Schürmeyer

10 May 1940 (*Blitzkrieg* in the West)

3.(F)/10	Do 17M/P	Eschweiler	?
3.(F)/11	Do 17P	?	Hauptmann Reinhold Tüttelmann
4.(F)/11	Do 17P	Bonn-Hangelar	Hauptmann Werner Thiel
4.(F)/14	Do 17M/P	Grosskönigsdorf	Hauptmann Franz Kusatz
1.(F)/22	Do 17P	Bad Kreuzenach	Hauptmann Hans Dietrich
2.(F)/22	Do 17P	?	Hauptmann Ernst Blauensteiner
3.(F)/22	Do 17P	Wiesbaden	Hauptmann Walter Kaatsch
3.(F)/31	Do 17P	?	Hauptmann Kurt Schulze-Wiehenbrauch
1.(F)/120	Do 17P	Trondheim-Vaernes	Major Anton Schub
4.(F)/121	Do 17P/Ju 88	Gablingen	Hauptmann Ulrich Kerber
5.(F)/122	Do 17P	Köln-Wahn	Hauptmann Herbert Böhm
1.(F)/123	Do 17P/Ju 88	Langendiebach	Oberleutnant Hans Mühlbauer/Gerhard Sembritzki
2.(F)/123	Do 17P	Mönchengladbach	Hauptmann Günter Hurlin
3.(F)/123	Do 17P	Gelnhausen	Hauptmann Reinhard Liebe-Piderit
1.(F)/124	Do 215/Do 17R	Berlin-Staaken	Hauptmann Hans Wolff
Wekusta 1/ObdL	Do 17	Berlin-Gatow	Oberleutnant Kurt Jonas
Wekusta 26	Do 17Z	Münster-Loddenheide	Hauptmann Sigmund *Freiherr* von Rottberg
Wekusta 51	Do 17	Langendiebach	Oberleutnant Gerd Nissen
AStzbV 2	Do 17M	Bremen	Oberleutnant Herbert Sewing
Aufklärungsstaffel I *Flakkorps*	Do 17P/M	?	?
Aufklärungsstaffel II *Flakkorps*	Do 17M	Köln-Ostheim	Oberleutnant Gerhard Langguth
Aufklärungsstaffel zbV	Do 17M	Gütersloh	Oberleutnant Heinz-Wolfgang Florin
KG 2	Do 17Z	Ansbach	Oberst Johannes Fink
I./KG 2	Do 17Z	Giebelstadt	Major Martin Gutzmann
II./KG 2	Do 17Z	Ansbach	Oberstleutnant Paul Weitkus
III./KG 2	Do 17Z	Illesheim	Major Werner Kreipe
KG 3	Do 17Z	Würzburg	Oberst Wolfgang Chamier-Glisczinski
I./KG 3	Do 17Z	Aschaffenburg	Oberstleutnant Rudolf Gabelmann
II./KG 3	Do 17Z	Schweinfurt	Oberst Albrecht Jahn
III./KG 3	Do 17Z	Würzburg	Major Wilhelm Georg von Kunowski
KG 76	Do 17Z	Nidda	Oberstleutnant Stefan Fröhlich
I./KG 76	Do 17Z	Nidda	Major Ludwig Schulz
II./KG 76	Do 17Z	Nidda	Major Walter Hill
III./KG 76	Do 17Z	Nidda	Major Franz Reuss
KG 77	Do 17Z	Düsseldorf	Generalmajor Wolf von Stutterheim
I./KG 77	Do 17Z	Werl	Major Rolf Balcke
II./KG 77	Do 17Z	Düsseldorf	Major Franz Behrendt
III./KG 77	Do 17Z	Düsseldorf	Major Max Kless
Stab./StG 1	Do 17M	Siegburg	Oberst Eberhard Baier
Stab./StG 2	Do 17M	Köln-Ostheim	Oberleutnant Hans Metz
Stab./StG 77	Do 17M	Köln-Butzweilerhof	Oberleutnant Braunaus
KüFlGr 606	Do 17Z	Copenhagen	Oberstleutnant Hermann Edert
1./KüFlGr 606	Do 17Z	Copenhagen	Hauptmann Wolfgang Lenchow
2./KüFlGr 606	Do 17Z	Copenhagen	Hauptmann Werner Lassmann
3./KüFlGr 606	Do 17Z	Copenhagen	Hauptmann Heinrich Golcher
7.(F)/LG 2	Do 17M/P	Düsseldorf	?
9.(H)/LG 2	Do 17	Münster-Handorf	Oberleutnant Gerhard Wöbbeking

13 August 1940 (Eagle Day)

Wekusta 1/ObdL	Do 17Z	Oldenburg	Oberleutnant Kurt Jonas
2.(F)/11	Do 17P	Bernay	Major Richard Paulitsch
4.(F)/14	Do 17M/P/Bf 110	Cherbourg	Hauptmann Franz Kusatz
Aufkl(F)/22	Do 17P	Trondheim	Oberstleutnant Erik Thomas
3.(F)/31	Do 17P	St Brieuc	Hauptmann Sieckmus?
1.(F)/120	Do 17P	Stavanger	Major Anton Schub
4.(F)/121	Do 17P	Villacoublay	Hauptmann Ulrich Kerber
5.(F)/122	Do 17P	Haute-Fontaine	Hauptmann Herbert Böhm
2.(F)/123	Do 17P	Mönchengladbach	Hauptmann Günter Hurlin
Wekusta 26	Do 17Z	Grimbergen	Hauptmann Sigmund *Freiherr* Von Rottberg
Wekusta 51	Do 17	Buc	Oberleutnant Kurt Kreowski

KG 2	Do 17Z	Saint-Léger	Oberst Johannes Fink
I./KG 2	Do 17Z	Epinoy	Major Martin Gutzmann
II./KG 2	Do 17Z	Saint-Léger	Oberstleutnant Paul Weitkus
III./KG 2	Do 17Z	Cambrai-Sud	Major Adolf Fuchs
KG 3	Do 17Z	Le Culot	Oberst Wolfgang Chamier-Glisczinski
I./KG 3	Do 17Z	Le Culot	Oberstleutnant Rudolf Gabelmann/Oberst Karl *Freiherr* von Wechmar
II./KG 3	Do 17Z	Antwerp-Deurne	Hauptmann Otto Pilger
III./KG 3	Do 17Z	Sint-Truiden	Hauptmann Erich Rathmann
KG 76	Do 17Z	Cormeilles-en-Vexin	Oberstleutnant Stefan Fröhlich
I./KG 76	Do 17Z	Beauvais	Major Ludwig Schulz
III./KG 76	Do 17Z	Cormeilles-en-Vexin	Major Alois Lindmayr
II./NJG 1	Do 17Z	Düsseldorf	Hauptmann Karl-Heinrich Heyse
Stab./StG 1	Do 17M	Angers	Major Walter Hagen
Stab./StG 2	Do 17M	Saint-Malo	Maj Oskar Dinort
Stab./StG 3	Do 17M/Z	Bretigny	Oberst Karl Angerstein
Stab./StG 77	Do 17M	Caen	Hauptmann Clemens von Schönborn-Wiesentheid
KüFlGr 606	Do 17Z	Brest	Oberstleutnant Hermann Edert
1./KüFlGr 606	Do 17Z	Brest	Hauptmann Wolfgang Lenchow
2./KüFlGr 606	Do 17Z	Brest	Hauptmann Werner Lassmann
3./KüFlGr 606	Do 17Z	Brest	Hauptmann Heinrich Golcher

Other Battle of Britain Do 17 Units

Aufkl 10	Do 17P	Various	
Aufk 21	Do 17P	Bergen-op-Zoom	Major Konrad Graf von Uxkül-Gyllenband
Aufkl 121	Do 17	Various	

5 April 1941 (invasion of Yugoslavia)

2.(F)/11	Do 17P	Sofia	Oberleutnant Kurt Randel-Semper
KG 2	Do 17Z	Wien-Zwölfaxing	Oberst Herbert Reickhoff
I./KG 2	Do 17Z	Wien-Zwölfaxing	Major Waldemar Lerche
6./KG 2	Do 17Z	Wien-Zwölfaxing	Hauptmann Gerhard Czernik
III./KG 2	Do 17Z	Wien-Zwölfaxing	Major Friedrich Dreyer
III./KG 3	Do 17Z	Münchendorf	Major Erich Rathmann
Stab./StG 2	Do 17P	Belica Nord	Major Oskar Dinort

21 June 1941 (*Barbarossa* – invasion of the Soviet Union)

2.(F)/11	Do 17P	Suwalki	Hauptmann Kurt Randel-Semper
Wekusta 1	Do 17Z	Jürgenfeld	Oberleutnant Heinrich Kater
Wekusta 26	Do 17Z	Warschau	Oberleutnant Martin Finkeldey
III./KG 3	Do 17Z	Suwalki	Major Erich Rathmann
KG 2	Do 17Z	Arys-Rostken	Oberst Herbert Reickhoff
I./KG 2	Do 17Z	Arys-Rostken	Major Waldemar Lerche
III./KG 2	Do 17Z	Lyck	Oberstleutnant Heinrich Conrady
Stab./KG 3	Do 17Z (two only)	Deblin	Oberst Wolfgang Chamier-Glisczinski
I./KG 3	Do 17Z (two only)	Deblin	Hauptmann Kurt Peters

Do 17 *Kampfflieger Ritterkreuz* Recipients

Name	Rank	Unit	Date of Award	Fate
Bradel, Walter	Hauptmann	9./KG 2 (*Staffelkapitän*)	17 September 1941	Killed in action on 5 May 1943
Chamier-Glisczinski, Wolfgang von	Oberst	KG 3 (*Kommodore*)	6 October 1940	Killed in flying accident on 12 August 1943
Dous, Willi	Oberleutnant	8./KG 3	5 July 1941	Killed in action on 18 July 1941
Fink, Johannes	Oberst	KG 2 (*Kommodore*)	20 June 1940	Survived the war
Fröhlich, Stefan	Generalmajor	KG 76 (*Kommodore*)	4 July 1940	Survived the war
Genzow, Joachim	Oberleutnant	4./KG 2 (*Staffelkapitän*)	23 March 1941	Survived the war
Geschwill, Heinz	Leutnant	9./KG 3	23 March 1941	Survived the war
Hahn, Joachim	Major	KüFlGr 606 (*Kommandeur*)	21 October 1940	Killed in action on 3 June 1942
Hunger, Heinrich	Leutnant	*Stab.*/KG 2	5 July 1941	Killed in action on 14 August 1941
Illg, Wilhelm-Friedrich	Oberfeldwebel	9./KG 76	1 October 1940	PoW 1 September 1940
Krüger, Horst	Oberleutnant	3.(F)/10	4 November 1941	Survived the war
Kusatz, Franz	Major	1.(F)/*Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* (*Staffelkapitän*)	25 November 1942	Killed in action on 21 October 1942
Lindmayr, Alois	Hauptmann	7./KG 76 (*Staffelkapitän*)	21 July 1940	Survived the war
Rieckhoff, Karl	Oberst	KG 2 (*Kommodore*)	5 July 1941	Survived the war
Schulz, Ludwig	Major	I./KG 2 (*Kommandeur*)	16 August 1940	Survived the war
Stutterheim, Wolf von	Generalmajor	KG 77 (*Kommodore*)	4 July 1940	Died of wounds on 3 December 1940

COLOUR PLATES

1
Do 17F-1 40+M11 of 1.(F)/124, Wiener-Neustadt, Austria, 1938

This reconnaissance unit was reformed at Wiener-Neustadt, in Austria, from 1./*Aufklärungsgruppe* 28, having previously been an He 70 unit from April 1936 to October 1937. By the outbreak of war, the unit's codes had changed to G2, with the *Staffel* letter H, and standard camouflage had been applied. 1.(F)/124 was commanded by Oberleutnant Hans Stockhausen at the start of the war, and the unit was to suffer its first loss on 1 September 1939 when Oberleutnant Friedrich-Karl Runde (pilot) and *Staffelführer* Leutnant Günther Rosenfeld were both wounded prior to their Do 17F-1 crashing at Gross-Strehlitz – Bordfunker Unteroffizier Karl Schomber escaped the incident unscathed. Runde had recovered from his wounds by February 1940, allowing him to join 4.(F)/14. He was subsequently shot down over southern England on 21 July 1940 flying a Bf 110 and taken prisoner.

2
Do 17E-1 54+A25 of 5./KG 255, Leipheim, Germany, 1938

One of the early Do 17 bomber units, II./KG 255 was formed at Leipheim in March 1937 under the command of Oberstleutnant Dr Johann-Volkmar Fisser (who would later be killed commanding KG 51 on 12 August 1940). In the reorganisation of May 1939, II./KG 255 became III./KG 77, with the codes 3Z, by which time the *Gruppe* was commanded by Oberst Wolf von Stutterheim. He would take command of KG 77 in September 1939, the *Kampfgeschwader* playing an active part in the Poland campaign while still equipped with decidedly elderly Do 17E-1s – it would re-equip with brand new Do 17Zs shortly after the conquest of Poland. Generalmajor von Stutterheim was subsequently shot down over France on 15 June 1940 and badly wounded, and he eventually passed away on 3 December 1940. For his leadership of KG 77, he was awarded the *Ritterkreuz* on 4 July 1940.

3
Do 17F 27-14 of A/88, La Cenia, Spain, 1938

This aircraft was one of nine Do 17s that arrived in Spain in July 1938 as attrition replacements for Major Paul Matussek's A/88. The number 27 indicated the aircraft type (the Do 17 was named the *Bacalao* or cod fish by the Spanish) and 14 was the individual aircraft number. This particular Do 17 was recorded as being at Sabaddell in February 1939, after which it is assumed the bomber was gifted to the Spanish. The Dornier has the unit's devil's head emblem on the engine nacelles, and it was apparently christened *'Schnuches'* – a term of endearment used in the Rheinland-Pfalz region of southwest Germany.

4
Do 17P A6+AH of 1.(F)/120, Heiligenbeil, Germany, September 1939

Assigned to 1.(F)/120, which was led by Major Anton Schub and based at Heiligenbeil and Neuhausen, this aircraft was very active over Poland from 1 September 1939. It features both the *Staffel* badge of a reindeer's head and the curious inscription *Vom Himmel hoch da Komm ich her/ach wenn ich doch erst unten war* ('Here I come from high in the sky; ah but if only I were on the ground just now') immediately below the cockpit. After Poland, 1.(F)/120 took part in operations over Scandinavia, although by then the unit was converting to the He 111. The Heinkels were replaced by Ju 88s in the autumn of 1940, 1.(F)/120 having remained in Norway following its invasion in the spring of that year.

5
Do 17Z 5K+BT of 9./KG 3, Heiligenbeil, Germany, September 1939

Another Heiligenbeil-based unit active over Poland was III./KG 3, commanded by Oberstleutnant Karl Neuhüttler. Most III. *Gruppe* aircraft carried their *Staffel* badges on the starboard side of the nose beneath the cockpit, this insignia consisting of a hand of four aces for the *Stab*, the ace of clubs for 7. *Staffel*, ace of spades for 8. *Staffel* and ace of hearts for 9. *Staffel*. Later in 1940, these badges were placed on the outer edges of the engine cowlings. Many Do 17s also carried personalised names like this one, which has *"Blücher"* (almost certainly inspired by the famous Prussian field marshal who led his army in battle against Napoleon in 1813 and 1815) applied above its individual aircraft identification letter.

6
Do 17Z U5+FH of 1./KG 2, Liegnitz, Germany, September 1939

Only I. and II. *Gruppen* of KG 2 participated in the Poland campaign, III. *Gruppe* not being formed until March 1940. I./KG 2 was commanded by Major Werner Krahl and 1. *Staffel* by Hauptmann Hans-Dieter Hevelke. The latter would be killed in action on 10 September 1939 when his Do 17 was hit by flak while attacking targets around Nowogród, in northeastern Poland, and crashed near Sinadowa. Although the crew bailed out of the burning bomber, only the Beobachter survived. As clearly visible in this profile artwork, KG 2's aircraft carried a diagonal band on the nose, coloured white for I. *Gruppe*, red for II. *Gruppe* and yellow for III. *Gruppe*. Propeller hubs were also frequently painted in *Gruppe* or *Staffel* colours.

7
Do 17Z F1+JT of 9./KG 76, Rosenborn, September 1939

9./KG 76 would later become well known for its low-level attacks in the Battle of France and the Battle of Britain. During the Poland campaign, III. *Gruppe* was commanded by Major Hans Hoffmann and 9. *Staffel* by Oberleutnant Rudolf Strasser. The latter would be killed in action (along with his crew) on 19 May 1940 when his Do 17 was shot down by a Hurricane from No 85 Sqn, the bomber crashing near Valenciennes. KG 76 used coloured fuselage bands and propeller hubs to correspond with the *Staffel* colour.

8
Do 17Z F1+AM of 4./KG 76, Kassel-Rothwesten, Germany, March 1940

This aircraft was flown by Hauptmann Helmuth von Raven, the *Staffelkapitän* of 4./KG 76. Note the white fuselage band, this marking being unique to KG 76. Von Raven would be awarded the *Ehrenpokal* on 3 August 1942 and the *Deutsches Kreuz* in *Gold* on 24 September that same year whilst with II./KG 51, and he would later command I./KG 54. He survived the war. In June 1940, with the fighting in France now over, II./KG 76 disbanded in preparation for conversion to the Ju 88A, handing its Do 17Zs to I. and III./KG 76. These units would also convert to the Junkers twin-engined bomber later in the year.

9
Do 17M Z5+BH of *Aufklärungsstaffel I Flakkorps*, airfield unknown, May 1940

Very little is known about this short-lived unit. A similar *Staffel* in II *Flakkorps* was commanded by Oberleutnant Gerhard Langguth and based at Köln-Ostheim. Z5+BH was the only aircraft, identified as being a Do 17M, from either *Flakkorps* lost during the Battle of France. Engaged on a reconnaissance of the airfield at Charleville, it was shot down by flak near Reims on 20 May 1940, with Unteroffizier Edgar Berthold, Leutnant Siegfried Engel and Unteroffizier Werner Seemann being captured. All three men would be released when France capitulated the following month, by which time their unit had apparently disbanded.

10
Do 17P 5D+IL of 3.(F)/31, airfield unknown, May 1940

Commanded by Hauptmann Kurt Schulze-Wiehenbrauch, this unit participated in the Polish and French campaigns, operating from Stubendorf for the former. Its airfield during the Battle of France is not recorded, however, although it was thought to be in the Bonn area. For the Battle of Britain, 3.(F)/31 operated from St Brieuc, in western France. The camouflage scheme seen on the aircraft in this profile has been based on Do 17P 5D+JL, which crash-landed near Tavistock, in Devon, after being attacked by Hurricanes of No 238 Sqn drawing a reconnaissance mission on 27 August 1940. Its crew of three were all captured.

11
Do 17P 4N+TL of 3.(F)/22, Wiesbaden, Germany, May 1940

Commanded by Hauptmann Walter Kaatsch, this unit was very active over France during both the 'Phoney War' and the Battle of France that followed. Indeed, aircraft lost in combat by 3.(F)/22 were well photographed by Allied and German troops. Most shots show Do 17Ps with the ad hoc camouflage depicted here, this having been hastily adopted by the *Staffel* in early 1940. It would appear that they were repainted this way rather than undertaking a complete respray in the more substantial camouflage scheme found on the upper surfaces of attrition replacement aircraft supplied to the unit.

12
Do 17Z 3Z+AK of 2./KG 77, Werl, Germany, May 1940

I./KG 77, commanded by Major Rolf Balcke, would start the Battle of France based at Werl, having converted from the Do 17E to the Do 17Z immediately after the campaign in Poland. It would then move to Köln-Ostheim, Acremont and, finally, Beaumont, after which it would return to Germany to transition onto the Ju 88. 2. *Staffel* was commanded by Major Peter-Paul Pietrusky, whose aircraft is depicted here in profile. He was killed in action on 26 May 1940 while flying this aircraft, which suffered a direct hit by flak and crashed near Fromelles, in France. Pietrusky's place as *Staffelkapitän* was taken by Hauptmann Werner Leuchtenberg.

13
Do 17Z 5K+GK of 2./KG 3, Laon-Couvron, France, June 1940

This was the regular aircraft of Leutnant Erich Kunst, who flew throughout the Battle of France, the Battle of Britain and the *Blitz*. By 4 February 1941, he and his crew had completed 76 operational missions. Their luck finally ran out on the morning of 7 March 1941 when their aircraft (Do 17Z-2 Wk-Nr. 3391 5K+MK, which was a replacement for 5K+GK depicted here) was brought down by flak between Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Kunst and two of his crew were captured, but the Bordfunker was reported missing. The *Staffel* insignia seen beneath the cockpit of this aircraft consists of three Do 17s in silhouette 'flying' over a map of East Prussia.

14
Do 17Z 5K+BA of *Stab.*/KG 3, Würzberg, Germany, May 1940

Hauptmann Georg-Friedrich Altvater was the *Staffelkapitän* of *Stabstaffel*/KG 3, and on 12 May 1940 he was the Beobachter of this aircraft, which was initially damaged by flak and then intercepted by French Hawk 75As from GC I/5. With his bomber having been badly shot up, the unidentified pilot force-landed near Redu at 1015 hrs, with Bordfunker Oberfeldwebel Fritz Schwede being the only member of the crew to have been wounded during the engagement. Altvater would subsequently be killed in action near Kletskaya, in the Soviet Union, on 13 November 1942 whilst flying an He 111 of 6./KG 27.

15
Do 17P 4U+HK of 2.(F)/123, Mönchengladbach, Germany, May 1940

Commanded by Hauptmann Günter Hurlin, 2.(F)/123 was very active in the Battle of France. This aircraft, still painted in pre-war colours, was the *Staffel*'s first combat casualty of the campaign. Intercepted by Hurricanes of No 85 Sqn over Doenrade on 11 May 1940, 4U+HK force-landed at t'Rooth, near Schinnen in Holland, after it was badly damaged. Leutnant Heinz Brosch and Feldwebel Hermann Layher were both wounded, although pilot Feldwebel Erich Steiner emerged from the incident unscathed. 2.(F)/123 would convert to the Ju 88A in early 1941 and then move to the Mediterranean theatre.

16
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2642 3Z+GS of 8./KG 77, Cormeilles-en-Vexin, France, July 1940

This aircraft became the first Do 17Z to crash on British soil on 3 July 1940, the 8./KG 77 bomber having been intercepted by Hurricanes of No 32 Sqn over Tonbridge, Kent. It came down in a hop field at nearby Paddock Wood, Obergefrieter Erich Hofman and Unteroffizier Waldemar Theilig being killed and Unteroffizier Richard Brandes and Oberleutnant Hans-Georg Gallion captured in a wounded state. The aircraft's nose was adorned with the distinctive KG 77 insignia, the banner above which reads *'Ich will dass si vorfechten'* ('I want to open the fight').

17
Do 17P T6+FA of *Stab.*/StG 2, Saint-Malo, France, July 1940

During the early stages of World War 2, Ju 87-equipped units had their own elderly Do 17M/Ps for pre- and post-attack analysis – StG 2 would lose two Do 17Ms in the Battle of France and one in an accident on 20 July 1940 during the Battle of Britain. It is possible that this venerable Do 17P-2 is Wk-Nr. 4041 T6+FA, which was written off in an accident at Xanthi, in Greece, on 11 April 1941. By then most Dorniers had been replaced in this specialist role by Bf 110s or other more modern types.

18
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2542 U5+GM of 4./KG 2, Saint-Léger, France, July 1940

Shortly after dawn on 11 July 1940, this aircraft was intercepted off Harwich by a Hurricane of No 85 Sqn flown by Sqn Ldr Peter Townsend. In the ensuing combat, the latter was shot down and eventually rescued, while the badly damaged Do 17 limped back to crash-land at Mory. Only Oberleutnant Joachim Genzow escaped being wounded, with Leutnant Walter Bornschein, Oberfeldwebel Werner Borner and Feldwebel Friedrich Lohrer all requiring treatment. Later in the war all four crewmen were decorated, with Genzow and Bornschein (who was subsequently killed in action on 27 April 1944) being awarded the *Ritterkreuz* and Borner and Lohrer the *Deutsches Kreuz* in *Gold*.

19
Do 17Z-3 F1+CT of 9./KG 76, Cormeilles-en-Vexin, August 1940

On 18 August 1940, 9./KG 76, now commanded by Hauptmann Joachim Roth, carried out a low-level attack on RAF Kenley. Four aircraft would be shot down, including Roth's, and five damaged. F1+CT was amongst the latter, Feldwebel Adolf Reichel crash-landing it near Abbeville. Of the four-man crew (which included a war correspondent), only Unteroffizier Albert Haas was lightly wounded. Note that the aircraft was marked with the 5./KG 76 badge on its nose – the Do 17 had been assigned to 5. *Staffel* prior to II./KG 76's switch to the Ju 88A the previous month.

20
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2555 F1+FS of 9./KG 76, Cormeilles-en-Vexin, September 1940

This aircraft was shot down during the large-scale attack on London on 15 September 1940, the bomber force-landing at Lullingstone Castle Farm in Kent after being attacked by ace Flg Off John Dundas and American Plt Off Eugene Tobin of No 609 Sqn. Although Feldwebeln Rolf Heitsch, Hans Pfeiffer and Martin Sauter were all captured, Feldwebel Stephan Schmid was mortally wounded. It was reported that the aircraft's second F in its four-letter code was red, outlined in white, there was a red band around the fuselage and the propeller spinners were also red. A more unusual marking was the horizontal pink band on the outside of the rudders. Finally, the nose was adorned with the 8./KG 76 badge of three white bombers in silhouette against a red bomb and black shield. Note the smoke-producing pipe fitted to the tail of the Do 17, this apparatus purportedly being used by crews to feign damage and thus deter enemy fighters from pressing home their attacks.

21
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2879 5K+AM of 4./KG 3, Antwerp-Deurne, Belgium, September 1940

This Z-3 (bearing the II./KG 3 emblem beneath the cockpit) just about made it back from the late afternoon attack on London on 15 September 1940. With its starboard engine stopped and port engine struggling for power, Leutnant Sieghard Schopper managed to crash-land on the sand dunes at Mardyck, to the east of Calais. Schopper and *Staffelkapitän* Oberleutnant Bernhard Granicky avoided being wounded, although Feldwebeln Felix Gwidziel and Heinz Kirch were not so lucky.

22
Do 17Z F1+EK of 2./KG 76, Beauvais, France, September 1940

This was another aircraft that returned to France on 15 September 1940 with battle damage, F1+EK suffering a burst tyre. Its crew for the mission consisted of Unteroffiziere Theo Rehm and Hans-Joachim Hanke and Feldwebeln Ernst Kelmann and Schulz. Rehm usually flew with the *Staffelkapitän* Oberleutnant Rudolf Hallensleben.

23
Do 17Z F1+?R of 7./KG 76, Cormeilles-en-Vexin, France, October 1940

When bomber units switched predominantly to night operations with the commencement of the *Blitz*, He 111s, Ju 88s and, of course, Do 17s experienced a general toning down of their camouflage and markings. This was done on a *Staffel* by *Staffel* basis, with no two aircraft looking the same. The only identifying markings retained by this Do 17 are its *Gruppe* code letters (F1), single *Staffel* letter (T) and 7./KG 76 insignia – a dragon or crocodile on its hind legs. In December 1940 III./KG 76 would return to Germany to convert to the Ju 88A.

24
Do 17Z 5K+?T of 9./KG 3, Sint-Truiden, Belgium, November 1940

This aircraft was also heavily camouflaged for night operations, and as with the Do 17 in the previous profile, its *Gruppe* code letters (5K) and *Staffel* letter have escaped being resprayed black. On 11 November Z-2 Wk-Nr. 1170 landed at Sint-Truiden with 40 per cent damage due to enemy action and on 20 December Z-3 Wk-Nr. 2645 suffered 70 per cent damage in an accident at the same location. Either of these aircraft could have been the Dornier depicted here in artwork, as they both hailed from 9./KG 3.

25
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 2787 7T+HH of 1./ KüFlGr 606, Brest, France, October 1940

This Z-5 (note the bulge housing a flotation bag on the left flank of the aircraft's nose) was intercepted by Spitfires of No 611 Sqn whilst attacking Liverpool on 12 October 1940. With both of the bomber's engines on fire, Feldwebel Willi Staas and Unteroffizier Heinz Johannsen bailed out near Capel Curig, in north Wales. The latter is believed to have hit the tail of the aircraft shortly after vacating the cockpit, for he was found dead seven miles east of Caernarvon with an unopened parachute. Staas landed safely and was quickly captured. It was thought that their Do 17 had crashed 'somewhere in the wilds of north Wales', as no sign of the aircraft or the remaining two crewmen, Oberfeldwebel Willi Hagen and Oberleutnant-zur-See Karl-Franz Heine, could be found. Hagen, however, had managed to nurse the crippled Do 17 back to 1./ KüFlGr 606's airfield in Brest. Examination of the bomber post-mission revealed numerous bullet holes, as well as damage to the tailplane where it had almost certainly been struck by Unteroffizier Johannsen.

26
Do 17Z Wk-Nr. 3326 5K+GT of 9./KG 3, Kozani, Greeze, April 1941

A very well-photographed Do 17, this aircraft crash-landed at Kozani on 16 April 1941, having suffered 30 per cent battle damage. In line with other aircraft involved in the Balkans and Greek campaigns of 1941, 5K+GT had its cowlings and rudders painted yellow. The names of the bomber's crew and the cause of the Do 17's crash-landing are not known.

27
Do 17Z U5+AD of *Stab* III./KG 2, Athens, Greece, April 1941

The only Do 17 bomber units involved in the fighting in the Balkans and Greece in April-May 1941 were I., 6. and III./KG 2 and III./KG 3, with the remaining *Gruppen* from both *Geschwader* being in the process of converting to either the Do 217 (KG 2) or Ju 88 (KG 3) at that time. I. and III./KG 2 would move to Saloniki on 23 April 1941 and then Athens-Tatoi six days later, and they would not return to Germany until early June 1941. Aside from its yellow engine cowlings and rudders, U5+AD also has a diagonal stripe in the same colour on the nose to denote its assignment to the *Stabstaffel* of III./KG 2.

28
Do 17Z 5K+HT of 9./KG 3, Dubowo, Poland, June 1941

In May 1941, III./KG 3 moved from Greece to Germany and then to Poland in preparation for operations in support of *Barbarossa*. Duly flying from a number of airfields as the Wehrmacht advanced eastward into the Soviet Union, III./KG 3 eventually returned to Germany in December 1941 to convert to the Ju 88. The only record of an aircraft adorned with the code 5K+HT was Z-2 Wk-Nr. 3371, which was lost on operations near Smolensk on 13 July 1941 with the deaths of Leutnant Otto Kniep and his crew.

29
Do 17Z R4+LK of 2./NJG 2, Gilze-Rijen, the Netherlands, November 1940

The first Do 17Z-7 nightfighters entered limited service with I./NJG 1 towards the end of June 1940. Three months later I./NJG 2 was formed from II./NJG 1, operating a mix of Ju 88C-2s and Do 17Z-10s – the latter were exclusively flown by Hauptman Rolf Jung's 2. *Staffel*. R4+LK was the first 2./NJG 2 aircraft to be damaged in combat, the Z-10 apparently being attacked by an enemy nightfighter whilst being flown by Oberfeldwebel Herbert Schmidt on 9 November 1940. The first example to be lost on operations was Wk-Nr. 2859 R4+BK, which failed to return from an intruder sortie over eastern England on the night of 4 February 1941. Its demise resulted in the deaths of Oberleutnant Otto Häuser and his crew.

30
Do 17P K7+FK of 2. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel*, Dubowo, Poland, July 1941

In June 1941, 1. and 2. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* were formed to carry out night reconnaissance missions over the Soviet Union in elderly Do 17Ps. The first aircraft to be lost flying such a sortie was P-model Wk-Nr. 3540 KB+OB on 29 June 1941, this machine being assigned to 1. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel*. Identically equipped 3. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* was formed at Kowno, in Lithuania, in late June, and the unit suffered its first loss on 6 July. 4. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* was eventually established in August 1942, and it too received venerable Do 17Ps with which to carry out its hazardous missions. Unfortunately, little is known about the operations of the various *Nachtaufklärungsstaffeln*, all of which would convert to 'more modern' types (initially the Do 17Z and then the Do 217) in 1942-43. The most successful *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* pilot was Major Franz Kusatz, who commanded 1. *Nachtaufklärungsstaffel* in 1942 and was awarded the *Deutsches Kreuz* in *Gold* in December 1941, the *Ehrenpokal* in July 1942 and, posthumously, the *Ritterkreuz* in November of that same year. He had been killed in an accident on 21 October 1942 when his war-weary Do 17P (Wk-Nr. 4097 K7+HH) had suffered engine failure and crashed near Pieczonogi, in Poland.

INDEX

Note: page numbers in bold refer to illustrations and captions.

ace pilots 16–17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 30, 36, 48, 53, 64, 69, 84
aircraft:
  Dornier Do 215 bomber/reconnaisance 36–47
  Dornier Do 217 bomber 81, 84, 85, 86, 95
  Heinkel He 111 bomber 11, 15, 18, 21, 35, 66, 72, 83, 85, 92, 94
  Junkers Ju 87 dive-bomber 78, 94
  Junkers Ju 88 bomber 11, 15, **30**, 34, 35, **54**, 55, **57**, 61, 66, 73, **73**, 92, 93, 94, 95
  Messerschmitt Bf 109E fighter (Germany) 31, 36, 51, 57, 59
  Messerschmitt Bf 110 fighter (Germany) 34, 36, 51, 57, 76, 79
Albach, Feldwebel Heinrich 31, 51, 60, 63, 66

Baedeker blitz, the 83–85
Balkans and Greek campaign, the **4**, 79, **79**, 86, 95
Battle of Britain, the 33–73, **47**, **52**, **54**, **55**, **56**, **57**, **60**, **62**, **64**, **65**, **66**, 93, 94
Battle of France, the **23**, 23–31, **24**, **25**, **31**, 35, **64**, 93, 94
Biggin Hill airfield 54, 63
bomb load 7, 9, 10, 11–12, 15, 65
Borner, Oberfeldwebel Werner 47, 48
Breese, Feldwebel Werner 35–36

cockpit 11, **12**, **35**, **60**
convoy attacks on ships 35, 36, **47**
crew **35**, **36**, 47, **47**, **50**, 58, 59, **71**, **81**, **83**
Croatian air units 83

decoy flights 51, 59
design and development 6–8, 11–12
DFS 230 glider **87**
DLH *(Deutsche Luft Hansa)* 6, 7
Dornier Do 17 (bomber, reconnaissance, fighter) **6**, 65;
  Do 17E **6**, 7, 9, **22**, 77, **87**
  Do 17E-1 **37**, 92
  Do 17F 7, 9–10, **22**
  Do 17M 10, 13, 14, 20, 25, 50, 85, 86
  Do 17P 10, **10**, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, **19**, 21, 22, 24, **25**, 27, 28, 30, 31, 51, 61, 78, 79, 81, **84**, 85
  Do 17Z **12**, 13, 14, **14**, **22**, 24, 27, **27**, 28, **28**, 29, 30, 31, 33, **35**, 47, **47**, **48**, 50, **55**, 59, **62**, **70**, **72**, 74, 77, **78**, **80**, **84**, **86**, 87
  Do 17Z-1 11–12
  Do 17Z-2 12, 22
  Do 17Z-3 12, **22**, 32, 54
  Do 17Z-5 12, 22, **50**, **67**, **68**
  Do 17Z-7 32, 75, **75**
  Do 17Z-10 32, 75, **75**, 76
  V prototypes 6, 7, 10

engines 7, 10, **10**, 11, 12

Fink, Oberst Johannes 52, **53**, 68
floatation equipment 22, **67**, 95
FuG 202 *Liechtenstein* radar 32
fuselage **8**, 11, **25**, **70**, **82**

German aerial tactics 58, **62**, 66, 69, 71, 72, **72**

Hotchkiss H39 light tank **28**

insignia and markings **6**, **8**, **13**, **16**, **17**, **19**, **25**, **26**, **28**, **30**, **34**, **48**, **49**, **54**, **61**, **66**, **72**, **73**, **75**, **78**, **81**, **82**, **84**, 92, 93, 94, 95
International Military Aircraft Competition 6
invasion of Poland, the 13–15, **14**, **64**
IR systems **77**

Kain, Flg Off Edgar 'Cobbler' 17, 19
Kampfkopf ('Battlehead') cockpit 11, **12**
Kenley aerodrome attack **4**, **55**, 55–56
Kunst, Oberleutnant Erich 73–74, 93
Kusatz, Maj Franz 81, 95

Liebe-Piderit, Hauptmann Reinhard **31**
Lindmayr, Oberst Alois **64**
London bombings 63–64, **64**, **65**, 66
losses **4**, 9, 11, 13–14, **14**, 15, 16–31, **21**, **24**, **25**, **29**, 32–33, 36, 47, 48, 49, 51, **52**, 53–54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59–60, 61–62, 63, 64, 65–68, 69–70, 72–73, 74, 77, 78, 79–80, **81**, 82, 83, 84, 85–86, 92, 93, 94, 95
Luftwaffe, the:
  KG 2 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 35, **38**, **42**, **45**, 47, 49, 52, **52**, 53, **53**, 54, 55, 64, 66, 67, 68, 71, 72, 79–82
  I./KG 2 36, 51, 57, 58, 60, 74, **78**, 81, **81**, 82, 84, 93
  II./KG 2 34, 51, 57, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, **70**, 73, **74**, **79**, 95
  III./KG 2 **4**, 14, 27, 36, **45**, 51, 58, 60, 62, 63, 65, 73, 74, **74**, 78, 80, **80**, 81, 82, 95; KG 3 23, **27**, 29, 30, 31, 33, 36, **41**, **43**, **44**, 49, 52, 54, 55, 58, 62, 63, 67, 68, 72
  7./KG 3 **14**, **15**, **17**, 51, 71, **82**
  9./KG 3 **16**, **26**, **38**, **45**, 57, 71, **75**, 95
  I./KG 3 54, 61, 62
  II./KG 3 26, 28, **48**, 54, 61, 62, 65, 66, 73, 94, 95
  III./KG 3 13, **13**, 15, 24, **26**, 57, 59, 63, 73, 74, 78, 80, 82, 83, 93, 95
  KG 76 13, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, **28**, 29, **29**, **30**, 33, **39**, **43**, **44**, 49, **49**, 51, 52, 54, **54**, 59, **61**, 63, 64, 66, 71, 94, 95
  9./KG **55**, 55–57, **57**, 65
  II./KG 29, **29**, 30
  III./KG 76 29, 55, **64**, 66, 93
  KG 77 14, **14**, **22**, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30, **30**, 34, **34**, 35, **40**, **42**, 94
  KG 255 8, **37**, 92
  KüFL Gr 606 12, 21–22, 26, **45**, 50, **50**, 57–58, 59, 60–61, 65, 66, 67, **67**, **68**, 68–70, 72–73, **80**, **81**, 95
  Legion Condor **6**, 9, 10
  A/88 **6**, **8**, **9**, 11, **37**
  LLG 85, **86**, **87**
  NJG *(Nachtjagdgeschwader)* units 32, **75**, 75–76, **77**, 80–81, **84**, 85, 95

Manowarda, Oberleutnant Karl von 68, **71**, 81, 84, 85
Moll, Leutnant Erwin 30, **30**, 52, 54, 58, 61–62, 63–64, 66
Mould, Plt Off Peter 'Boy' 16–17

night attacks 57–58, 60–61, 65, 66, 68, 72, **72**, 75–77, 95

Operation *Barbarossa* (June – Dec 1941) 79–83, **81**, 95
operational ranges 12, 15, 65

Perchemeier, Sonderführer Willi 55, 56
production 10, 12, 15

Radio Direction Finding (radar) stations 51
RAF, the 34, 36, 65, 71; Sqn Intelligence Reports 50–51
RC 50/30 camera **20**
reconnaissance 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, **20**, **21**, 21–22, **24**, 26, 28, 29, 36, 47, 49, 50, 54, 61, 66, 73–74, 93, 95
Richey, Flg Off Paul 16–17, 24, **24**
RLM *(Reichsluftfahrtministirium)* 7

Salès, Sgt Edouard 17, 18
Schulz, Oberleutnant Albert 75–76
Schwartz, Oberleutnant Herbert 58–59
'Sitzkrieg' (Phoney War) 16, 93
Spanish Civil War, the 8–10, **9**, 11
Stutterheim, Generalmajor Wolf von **30**, 31

tests and trials 7
Thiel, Leutnant Georg 49–50
Thompson, Sqn Ldr John 36–47
Townsend, Sqn Ldr Peter **33**, 48, 94

Uebe, Generalmajor Klaus **74**
Unger, Unteroffizier Günther **57**

weaponry **62**, 72;
  7.9mm MG 17 machine gun 32
  7.992mm MG 15 machine gun 7, **8**, 10, 11, **35**, **36**, 48, 50, **60**, **71**
  SD 2 'Butterfly Bombs' 71, 72
weather conditions 20, 21, 47, 52, 57, 58, 65, 68

OSPREY PUBLISHING
Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
PO Box 883, Oxford, OX1 9PL, UK
1385 Broadway, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10018, USA
E-mail: info@ospreypublishing.com
www.ospreypublishing.com

OSPREY is a trademark of Osprey Publishing Ltd

First published in Great Britain in 2019

© Osprey Publishing Ltd, 2019

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: PB 9781472829634; eBook 9781472829641; ePDF 9781472829658; XML 9781472829665

Edited by Tony Holmes
Cover Artwork by Mark Postlethwaite
Aircraft Profiles by Chris Davey
Index by Fionbar Lyons
Originated by PDQ Digital Media Solutions, UK

Osprey Publishing supports the Woodland Trust, the UK's leading woodland conservation charity.

Editor's Note

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chris Davey for the countless profile artworks he has expertly created (often following his own in-depth research) by hand with his airbrush in Mansfield since his first commission for Osprey – illustrating a volume in the *Aircraft of the Aces* series – in 1994. The very last 'old school' profile artist on the books with the company, Chris has now decided to retire. The 30 Do 17s profiles in this volume, therefore, are his last newly commissioned artworks for Osprey. It has been a pleasure working with you over the past 25 years, Chris. Well done and many thanks.

To find out more about our authors and books visit **www.ospreypublishing.com**. Here you will find extracts, author interviews, details of forthcoming events and the option to sign up for our newsletter.

Front Cover

At the end of March 1941, *Stab.*, I. 6. *Staffel* and III./KG 2 moved to Austria in preparation for attacking the Balkans and Greece – the first raid on this front was undertaken against Belgrade, in Yugoslavia, on 6 April 1941. The bombing of Greek targets commenced nine days later, and on 16 April Do 17 units mounted a series of low-level raids against British troop concentrations near the city of Larissa.

Three Do 17Zs of *Stabstaffel*/KG 2 led by *Staffelkapitän* Hauptmann Konrad Ebsen carried out one of those attacks, with disastrous results, as all three bombers were shot down by ground fire. Ebsen's aircraft, coded U5+DA, crashed near Tirnavos, with all four crew killed. Leutnant Ludwig Rohr's U5+GA came down near Veria, killing him and two crew – the lone survivor had managed to bail out wounded. Finally, Leutnant Heinrich Hunger's U5+BA crash-landed near Larissa, although all four crew managed to evade capture. Command of *Stabstaffel*/KG 2 was now given to Oberleutnant Hans-Georg Peters, who would be shot down and killed on 22 June 1941.

Hunger, who would be awarded the *Ritterkreuz* on 5 July 1941, and the same crewmen who were shot down on 16 April 1941, fell victim to Soviet flak on 14 August 1941. Two crew were reported missing whilst Hunger and his Bordfunker (radio operator) were believed to have been executed by Soviet troops shortly after they were captured (*Cover artwork by Mark Postlethwaite*)

Title pages

Do 17Z-2 F1+DT of 9./KG 76 was one of the nine Dorniers from the *Staffel* that carried out the daring low-level raid on Kenley during the early afternoon of 18 August 1940. All of the bombers were damaged by either flak or fighters, but only two crashed in England. Hit by anti-aircraft fire over the target, F1+DT was then attacked by Hurricanes from No 111 Sqn. The Do 17's pilot, Oberleutnant Rudolf Lamberty, eventually crash-landed at Leaves Green near Biggin Hill. The crew of five, which included *Staffelkapitän* Hauptmann Joachim Rath, were all captured wounded

All photographs in this volume are from the author's collection